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William Preston Davies

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RIVALRY BETWEEN THE New York and San Francisco fairs has precipitated a war between the Pennsylvania and New York Central railroads. Passenger traffic between Chicago has not come up to the expectations of any of the roads, a condition which they attribute to the lower rates west than east of Chicago. And, because of the lower rates, it is said people from the center of the country go to the San Francisco rather than the



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New York fair. To overcome that condition the Pennsylvania has just put on a super-fast train, with all the trimmings, which makes the Chicago-New York trip in 17 hours and 25 minutes eastbound and 17 hours flat westbound. This new train is called the Trail Blazer. To meet this competition the New York Central countered with a similar train, making the same time, which it named the pace maker. And the New York Central people call the Pennsylvania train the Hell Raiser.

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THERE IS NO LONGER ANY competition between railroads in rates. The interstate commerce commission attends to the rates. Current competition is confined to speed and service. Years ago it was different, and occasionally the railroads would get to slashing rates until one could travel for almost nothing. Once in a Chicago railway office I was urged to buy a ticket to Denver for \$5, to which figure the western roads had cut their rate. I was headed the other way, however, and couldn't take advantage of the offer. In the eighties I had occasion to make several trips east and west, and I could usually save from \$2 to \$4 by buying my ticket at a broker's office rather than at the railway station. The railroads, it appeared, had an agreement not to cut rates, and they didn't—openly. But in some mysterious way brokers became possessed of batches of per-

fectly new tickets which they sold at a big discount.

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THE 21ST ANNUAL PUBLICATION of the Automobile Manufacturers association, "Automobile Facts and Figures," gives a statistical review of the automobile industry, some of the tables covering the entire period since 1913 while others are confined to more recent years. Growth of the industry is indicated by the number of factory sales year by year. In 1900 there were sold 4,192 passenger cars, with a value of \$4,899,443. In 1929 sales reached the all-time peak of 4,790,707, with a value of \$2,981,141,842. This figure was almost duplicated in 1937, but in 1938 sales fell off to 2,124,746, with a wholesale value of \$1,331,598,129.

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STATES HAVING MORE THAN one million registrations in 1938 are California, with 2,510,867; Illinois, 1,780,865; Michigan, 1,408,835; New Jersey, 1,000,684; New York, 2,584,123; Ohio, 1,870,249; Pennsylvania, 1,976,466; and Texas, 1,548,343. North Dakota is credited with 174,256.

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AN INTERESTING TABLE OF operating costs since 1925 is given. With the figure for 1926 taken as 100, oil costs have been reduced to 55, repairs to 32, and tires and tubes to 38. Mileage per gallon of gasoline has remained almost constant, never going above the ratio of 100 or rising above 104. Total operating costs have been reduced to a fraction below 50.

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THE FACT THAT THERE HAS been no material change in average gasoline consumption per mile while there have been such marked changes in other factors invites speculation as to the reason. Several possible influences suggest themselves. While the trend seems to have been away from the big cars of years ago, the smaller cars have been made heavier, with more powerful engines. Four cylinders have been displaced by 6, 8, 12 and even 16 cylinders, all making for smoother operation but higher gas consumption. There have been added heaters, wipers, more powerful lights, radios and other electrical devices, all making additional demands on batteries and power plants. Also, more winter driving is being done than formerly.

IN HIS DAILY COLUMN DALE Harrison the other day listed a number of achievements and activities in which the city of New York pioneered. Among other things he said that the first long distance call was made from New York to Newark, N. J. If he had ever heard of me I might have thought he said that to get a rise out of me, for I have insisted in season and out of season that my own home town, Brantford, Ont.,



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was first in pretty much everything pertaining to the telephone. If Harrison referred to the first commercial long distance call, I have nothing to say. New York can have it. But the first long distance telephone conversation was from Brantford to Paris, 10 miles away, according to Alexander Graham Bell, who ought to know.

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DR. BELL'S STATEMENT IS that on August 10, 1876, he obtained the use of the telegraph line between Brantford and Paris for a telephone conversation. The telegraph manager in Brantford was W. H. Griffin, who years later was chief clerk to Superintendent Jenks of the Northern division of the Great Northern railway. It was a one-way conversation, with Griffin and the inventor's uncle at the sending end in Brantford, and the inventor himself at the receiver in Paris. The inventor's father, Professor A. M. Bell, had intended to participate in the sending, but some engagement stood in the way and he had not expected to be present. Bell, the inventor, listened to music and conversations by several persons and telegraphed instructions to Griffin for adjustment of the instruments. Presently he was astonished to recognize the voice of his father, who had come upon the scene unexpectedly. So, while Harrison may have the first commercial message for his town if he wants it, I claim for mine the first long distance conversation on the authority of the man who invented the telephone.

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UNDOUBTEDLY THE SENSATIONAL broadcast by Orson Welles some months ago, reporting the arrival of monsters from Mars, helped materially to focus atten-

tion on the ruddy little planet and the observations which are now being made of it on its present almost closest approach to the earth. Next to the moon Mars is now the most conspicuous figure in the southern sky. Its red glow can be seen some time before other stars are visible. Its position is about 45 degrees downward from and to the right of the moon, and about half the distance of the moon above the horizon.

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MARS IS ABOUT HALF THE diameter of the earth, and consequently is of about one-eighth the earth's volume. Its year, measured by its circuit of the sun, is equal to 686.98 of our days, and its day of 24 hours, 37 minutes and 22.66 seconds corresponds closely to ours. The inclination of the planet's axis also corresponds to the inclination of the earth's axis. Mars has two tiny satellites, or moons, one estimated to be from 7 to 10 miles in diameter and the other measuring about 15 miles. Both revolve in the same direction with the diurnal movement of Mars itself, but the smaller and inner one is so close and moves so rapidly that it appears to rise in the west and set in the east twice each Martian day. Its distance from Mars is only a little more than 6,000 miles.

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PRESS DISPATCHES A FEW weeks ago told of the fall of a meteorite on a farm near Dresden, Ontario, a little town near the southwestern tip of the province. A Canadian paper gives this account of the fall of the celestial fragment:

"Mrs. Solomon was badly frightened on Tuesday evening when the fiery missile plopped into the beetfield on their farm. Her husband was away from home at the time, and when he returned he wanted to go out to the field and see what it was, but she would not let him. Smoke smelling like sulphur rose from the field, she said, for an hour and a half or more. Early in the morning they went out to the field and found that the mass had gone about six feet into the earth. When dug out it was found to be roughly egg-shaped, black in color, and 88 pounds 4 ounces in weight. The center was solid, but the surface was soft and could be easily crushed by hand.

"Fragments of the meteorite were picked up on adjacent farms.

"Solomon sold the meteorite for \$4 to Dr. Luke Smith of Chatham, who has since been offered sums up to \$500 for it by scientific institutions. At present it is on exhibition at the office of the Daily Star in Toronto."

S. K. FISHER OF DEVILS Lake writes that he and Mrs. Fisher made that North Shore drive a few weeks before I did. He has made the same trip several times and thinks that many of our people are missing a lot when they fail to visit a territory so beautiful and picturesque which is so close at hand. On the return trip he and Mrs. Fisher stayed a few days at Grand Marais and drove up the Gunflint Trail and back, about 80 miles each way



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which he says is very much worth while. Then followed a leisurely drive to Ely, branching off near Illgen City, a day or so at Burnside lake, with many rock islands and good timber, thence to International Falls, Kenora, Winnipeg and home. One beauty about such a trip is the way it can be varied to suit time, taste and purse.

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"YOU MISSED SOME MAGNIFICENT scenery, however, on the North Shore," continues Mr. Fisher. "Schreiber (pronounced Skiber by the Canadians there) is some 140 miles beyond Port Arthur and is the end of the trail. From Port Arthur to the Nipigon river is only ordinary, but from there to Schreiber there is superlative scenery—many large islands, beautiful lake panoramas and almost Mountainous roads. There are very few places to stop as yet. There is a de luxe lodge at the Nipigon river and a good C. P. R. hotel at Schreiber. We were there the first part of June and were almost the only tourists on the road.

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"HERE IS AN INTERESTING bit of information from that country of such beautiful, clear cold water. There are about 500 cases of goiter in the Fort William schools (this from a Fort William paper) due to the lack of iodine in their water."

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WE HAD SOME THOUGHT TO going on to Schreiber, but lack of time prevented. The Canadian government is arranging for the completion of the road between Schreiber and Sault Ste. Marie. When that is finished there will be

a fine drive along the entire north shore of the lake to the Soo, and thence across into Michigan and home by way of northern Michigan and Wisconsin, a trip which can be varied in any number of ways.

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I HAVE BEEN EXAMINING A book on Canadian name origins lent me by Win Working. Entitled "The Origin and Meaning of Place Names in Canada," the book is by G. H. Armstrong. It represents what must have been an immense amount of research, for it contains several hundred names of cities, villages, counties and townships in Canada, with a paragraph devoted to the origin of each, often with a little dissertation on some interesting and little-known bit of history associated with the place.

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MANY OF THE CANADIAN names, of course, are those of places in Britain or Ireland which were held in affection by immigrants who wished to perpetuate in the new land names which had been familiar to them from birth. There are also European continental names for which a like motive is responsible.

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IT IS INTERESTING, ALSO, TO note the great number of places in older Canada—Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime provinces,—that were settled and named by United Empire Loyalists who moved to Canada from the northern American colonies during the Revolutionary war. Those colonists, intense in their loyalty to Great Britain, regarded their revolutionary neighbors as dangerous radicals and fanatics, violators of the constitution and enemies of orderly government. Their sincerity is evidenced by the fact that rather than give their approval to what they believed to be wrong, they left their homes and sacrificed their possessions to start life afresh and barehanded in territory which was then a desolate wilderness.

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THE DESCENDANTS OF those stubborn loyalists are now the bone and sinew of scores of thriving Canadian communities. Many of them again have migrated to the United States and have assisted in building the great commonwealths of the middle west. They are as staunch and uncompromising supporters of the American government and American institutions as their ancestors were in their support of King George III.

IN DOING REMODELING work on the Frank Gilby residence on South Sixth street R. J. Moore discovered a large number of old magazines which the Gilbys had



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collected during the early years of their residence there. Among them were several copies of the Saturday Evening Post for dates in the early months of 1901 which, through Mr. Moore's courtesy, I have had opportunity to examine.

When one lives in close contact with a friend for many years he is scarcely more conscious of the changes that occur in the friend than those which he, himself, experiences. And when shown a picture of the friend as he was in his youth he can scarcely recognize it until gradually a few familiar aspects begin to appear. And one looking over those old numbers of the Post would be impressed at first more by the difference between the old and the new than by their resemblance.

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ONE IS STRUCK FIRST BY the mechanical differences. The pages are the same size, but there are only 16 to 20 of them in contrast with the 80 to 100 of today, and they are packed so solid with small type as to make difficult reading. Instead of the liberal display of full-page advertisements, often in color, as of today, most of the earlier advertisements are single column, three or four inches deep, and there are not many of them. From the standpoint of bulk the old magazine is anything but impressive.

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THE OLD ADVERTISEMENTS, small and few in number, would scarcely meet the approval of the ad writer of today as to form, and most of their subject matter would be strange to the reader of today. Parlor organs, steam cookers, candles, roll-top kitchen cabinets and buggies were advertised, but no automobiles, gasoline, oil, tires or electrical apparatus. The wasp waist was then fashionable, and it was illustrated by a corset ad and a costume design. Both advertisements and articles were illustrated, but usually in a fashion that seems strange today.

MUCH OF THE LITERARY content of the old magazine corresponds closely to that in the patent inside of the old country weekly. There are popular science articles which one might suppose to have been written by a schoolboy. In one article describing the vast western area which once was supposed to be a desert there occurs this sapient observation:

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"IT HAS BEEN ASCERTAINED that beneath this vast region there is spread what might be called a sheet of underground water, which may be reached by driving wells. From these wells water can be pumped by means of windmills, and in this way cattle may be supplied. In fact, millions of cattle are thus watered at the present time, the plains being divided up onto squares of 12 miles on each side, in which cattle spend their lives without ever seeing a stream or lake."

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THE MAGAZINE OF 38 YEARS ago was chary of political comment. Its editorial pages were filled chiefly with harmless observations of a general character, to which nobody could take exception, and which would not go very far in stimulating thought. In the period covered by the numbers which I have, McKinley had just begun to serve his second term, the Buffalo exposition at which he was to be assassinated was under way, and Theodore Roosevelt had been "shelved" into the vice presidency and probably was championing his teeth and wondering if that ended his political career. The old Post was silent on those things.

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IN ITS FICTION DEPARTMENT the magazine used material by authors then popular, but now almost forgotten. There is a serial by Morgan Robertson, once a writer of best sellers, but who has dropped completely out of sight. Then, as now, the Post featured articles by persons of distinction in various walks of life. There is an article by Grover Cleveland on "The Young Man in Politics," and one by James J. Hill on "The Young Man and Speculation." Henry Clews had a financial article, and William Allen White had an article analyzing Carrie Nation and her hatchet crusade.

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A PERUSAL OF MAGAZINES published even so recently as 38 years ago is interesting in impressing on one the swiftness with which we have traveled and the changes which have been brought about in our ways of life.

THE MONTHLY BULLETIN of the State School of Forestry at Bottineau reports that half a million trees have been shipped from the school since April 15. Over 400,000 of these were



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planted throughout the state as field and farmstead shelterbelt and woodlot plantings, while 56,000 were used for replanting on last year's shelterbelts and some 38,000 were planted by 4-H boys and girls. The following 17 species of trees and shrubs were used: caragana, Russian olive, honeysuckle, lilac, green ash, American elm, Chinese elm, cottonwood, Northwest poplar, white willow, chokecherry, boxelder, Colorado blue spruce, Black Hills spruce, Ponderosa pine, Austrian pine, and Scotch pine. All of these, with the exception of cottonwood are raised at the School of Forestry Nursery. Orders are now being taken for trees for next year's planting at prices materially lower than formerly. I suggest that persons interested communicate with the school now.

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THE BULLETIN ALSO UTTERS this warning against quack tree "surgeons" of whom there are many traveling about the country:

"It is unfortunately true that a great many street and lawn trees in the towns and cities of North and South Dakota have suffered tremendously during the past several years of drouth, and due to their weakened condition many of them have become so infested with fungi and insects that it is necessary to seek professional advice and assistance to save them. There are, however, many individuals taking advantage of this unfortunate condition, traveling from town to town under the assumed title of tree specialists or tree experts. Many of these so-called tree specialists know very little more about the care of trees and shrubs than the average citizen does, but they are usually good salesmen and succeed in selling their services and special "cure-all" remedies at exorbitant prices; and often the effect is detrimental rather than beneficial.

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THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT there are no authentic tree specialists, fully qualified to give professional advice and efficient service. On the contrary, there are reliable

tree surgeons doing much in a practical way to educate the public as to the benefits of tree-repair work,—but the unscientific or dishonest work of some others still is doing much to offset it. Therefore before a person is hired to do any work of this kind he should be asked to show satisfactory proof that he has the backing of a well-known nursery or forestry agency. Many of the ailments of our trees are caused by conditions which can be easily and efficiently remedied by the owner himself. Among such remedies would be the fertilizing of evergreens, treating of trees infested with borers, and the proper pruning of shade trees.

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DOWN IN SOUTHERN MINNESOTA the other day they had rain which washed out railway tracks and did much other damage. Like many summer storms, that covered only a small area such storms have been common throughout the northwest. A few have been heavy enough to do damage, but most have been beneficial to the territory affected. Grand Forks happens to be in the center of a small dry spot which has received scarcely any precipitation for a month. While water would be more than welcome here, we have the satisfaction of knowing that other districts not far away have been more favored. While there are numerous dry spots we have no general drouth this year.

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SOMEONE ASKS WHY WE can't take water direct from the river for sprinkling and thus avoid the cost of treatment for that portion of our consumption. We could do that, but it would involve the duplication of our entire system of mains, which would be a costly job. Raw river water would be as good for sprinkling purposes as that which is treated, but not any better, notwithstanding a rather widely accepted opinion to the contrary.

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THE STATEMENT IS OFTEN made that our treated water is loaded with chemicals. As a matter of fact, it contains less "chemicals" than does raw river water. Years ago when our drinking water was obtained from wells it was customary to buy river water delivered by the barrel for laundry purposes because of the excessive hardness of the well water. But while the raw river water is much softer than that which was obtained from surface wells, it is now very much harder than that which one draws from the tap. The treatment given removes much of the lime and salts of various kinds which the water contains in its original state.

PURCHASE OF THE MINNEAPOLIS Journal by the Minneapolis Star will interest a wide circle of readers throughout the north-west to whose homes or offices the Journal has been a daily visitor for many years. Under the merger those subscribers will continue to receive their daily paper under the combined names of Star and Journal, but it will not be the



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same paper to them. Newspaper reading becomes a habit, and there grow up around a newspaper traditions whose disturbance often brings violent reactions. The reader becomes accustomed to certain forms and styles and material departure from which he is inclined to resist, and if he approves of its general tone and policy the paper becomes to him an institution, not, perhaps, quite as sacred as the Constitution, but partaking in some measure of the sacredness of that immortal document. Those who have been faithful readers of the Journal in the past will have some difficulty in adjusting themselves to the new order.

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CONSOLIDATION OF THE two papers leaves Minneapolis with only two papers in the afternoon field. For several years a similar process has been going on all over the country. It has affected not only the daily, but the weekly field. Many hundreds of newspapers, large and small, have been suspended or merged with others. There are fewer, but better newspapers than there were a quarter of a century ago. The modern newspaper has more subscribers and a better advertising patronage than its predecessor had, and it is able to give its patrons better service. And because that better service is given the paper of today has a larger and more satisfactory clientele.

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DOES THE MODERN NEWSPAPER print all the news? Certainly not. Does it suppress information? It does. Does it publish what ought not to be published? Undoubtedly. All of those things are done by every newspaper. In the first place, it is a physical impossibility for any newspaper, however large, to print everything that might be considered news. There is too much of it and a vast multitude of things must be left out. There must be made a selection of what is considered desirable for publication and the rest must be left out. In the second place, in the list of things for which space is available there are items which, in the interest of good taste, good morals and their possible effect on the innocent and defenseless, ought not to be published. On all these matters decisions must be made, daily, hourly, momentarily. And

because those who prepare the newspapers are just as human and fallible as are the lawyers, and doctors, and merchants, and farmers, and mechanics in their several vocations, the wrong thing is sometimes published and the right thing suppressed.

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PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT signed the Hatch bill restricting the political activities of federal employes. In doing so he expressed general approval of the purposes of the measure, but was quite severely critical of some of its provisions. In expressing himself as he did Mr. Roosevelt followed a course which he has often excoriated when it was followed by others. Quite often there has been expressed approval of the major purpose of some Roosevelt policy, but there has also been expressed doubt as to the wisdom of some of the methods by which it has sought to achieve those purposes. And whenever this has occurred there have been blasts of denunciation from the White House. The idea seems to be that all those are enemies of public welfare who do not agree with Mr. Roosevelt as to the best way of bringing it about. But in discussing the Hatch bill the president adopted precisely the method which he has heretofore condemned.

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ONE FEATURE OF THE Hatch bill which was noted with satisfaction by the president was that it will not prevent employes of the government from coming to the defense of its agencies and activities when these are attacked by falsehood and misrepresentation. Of course there is no way of preventing that, nor should there be. Nor is there any feasible way of preventing abuse of that right by injecting political propaganda into the outgivings of government employes and departments. The Roosevelt idea is that all criticism of the Roosevelt policies is false and misleading, and neither the Hatch bill nor any other is likely to stem the flood of propaganda that issues from the various agencies, the purpose of which is to convince the electorate that this is the best and wisest administration that ever was.

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CONGRESS ADJOURNS without any expression from the president with reference to a third term. But if he had intended at any time to seek a third term, the developments of the recent session should convince him of the futility of that course. The split in his own party membership in congress has resulted in the defeat of important measures to which the president was thoroughly committed, culmination in kicking out of the window the lending and housing bills. Seldom has a president been given such a rebuff while his own party was in control of both houses. Opposition to him would be even more pronounced in the nominating convention should he appear there as a candidate.

I GATHER FROM WHAT I read in the papers that skirts are to be shorter before they are longer, and we may look forward to a display of knees similar to that which prevailed some years ago. And it will be remembered that in that earlier period there were knees which would have looked much better if they had been invisible.

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THE HUMAN underpinning has been the subject of much observation and comment. It has been remarked that it took polite society a long time to recognize the fact that woman is a biped. It seems always to have been conceded, however, that persons of the male persuasion have two legs, though the display of those members unclad has sometimes given offense. The director of an English athletic field for boys caused the side walls of the dressing tent to be raised a foot or two for ventilation on hot days. He received a letter from a spinster lady living next door complaining that under those circumstances she could see the legs of the young gentlemen. The director, being an accommodating person, had the dressing tent moved to the opposite and distant side of the field. The lady wrote again, thanking him for his courtesy, but complaining that she could still see the legs of the young gentlemen — with a field glass.

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DURING ONE OF THOSE periods of transition in women's attire I met a girl on the street wearing what I suppose was the very latest of everything — skirts above knobby knees, short jacket unbuttoned, an atrocious headpiece, and high overshoes, unfastened and flopping every which way. The late W. W. Fagan stopped me and turned to get another view of the spectacle. "Gawd!" he said, "Did you ever see anything like that before?" I hadn't, and once was plenty.

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THE HOUSE WREN IS A charming little bird, and everyone enjoys his cheery song and apparently happy disposition. We enjoy, also, the courage with which he will warn intruders from the vicinity of the family nest. But it appears that the wren's pugnacity is not confined altogether to self defense. The nature department of the Winnipeg Free Press has had several stories of wrens invading the nests of other birds and killing their young.

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WHEN COLONEL WOLSELEY arrived in Winnipeg in 1870 in command of troops to quell the first Riel rebellion, Louis Riel, leader of the insurrection, received word of the approach of the troops while

he was at breakfast. He departed hurriedly, leaving breakfast table and dishes. The table has for years been in the possession of the Manitoba museum, and recently the two dinner plates in use have been added to the collection. They have been in the possession of the family of a member of the Wolseley expedition.

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IT IS NO LONGER NECESSARY for easterners to go west to find dude ranches on which they can make believe that they are real westerners. They have several of those ranches now in Pennsylvania and adjoining states. The young man from the law office in Boston and the stenographer from Trenton can jump into the car and in a couple of hours be ranching with all the accompaniment of saddle horses, ten-gallon hats, full moons and romance. It must be a great life.

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ALL THE POSTMASTERS attending the convention in Grand Forks are enthusiasts in the service. That enthusiasm is shared by those in the department all along the line. That common feeling was so apparent at the convention that E. F. Robertson, chief of the international money order department in Washington, put it into verse as follows:

* * *

SPECIALISTS

The world is rife with specialists,
Of every type today;
But folks take that for granted
and
Go calmly on their way.

Some think the grocer is the "tops,"
And praise him to the sky;
The butcher too they brag about,
When prices are not high.

Some others rank the auto man,
Of value most by far;
When he brings out at lower cost,
A handsome streamlined car.

Police court and department stores,
Hotels and night-clubs too;
Likewise the movies and the bank,
Each has a claim on you.

The telephone and telegraph
Are priceless in their sphere;
And now we have the radio,
Which brings the whole world
near.

True all those things we all admit,
Help round our modern life;
Just like the gas stove and the clock,
Assist the toiling wife.

But when you think of service,
folks,
The kind that never fails,
You have to turn to Uncle Sam,
And patronize the mails.

You choose the type that fits your needs.
Then pay a modest fee,
Your missive speeds where'er you will,
Safe, sure, efficiently.



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IN THE CAPITOL AT WASHINGTON several persons are kept busy at least part of the time erasing from the statuary names, sentiments and observations which visitors



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have scribbled on busts or pedestals. This scribbling is contrary to regulations, of course, but it can be done so quickly and quietly that it is difficult for guards to catch the scribblers at their work. Senator Ashurst says that the mania for that sort of writing is indicative of a nation trying to express itself. But if the senator thinks that there is anything new about it he is away behind the times. Young America was trying to express itself by scribbling on fences and barn doors when the senator was a boy, and it would be strange if he didn't do some of it himself. As to the statuary in the capitol, some of it might be improved by a little scribbling, which would tend to divert attention from the statues themselves.

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DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE between a cantaloupe and a musk melon? Neither do I. There isn't any. There are persons who will tell you that a cantaloupe has pink meat and a melon white, or vice versa. There is nothing to it. The words are different names for the same thing. I have read somewhere that the name "cantaloupe" was first applied to musk mellons by Spaniards in New York who, seeing the fruit on the New York market for the first time, called it after their home town or district in Spain, Canteloupa, where melons had been familiar to them before their migration to this country. That may or may not be true.

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THE FIRST HUMMING BIRD that I have seen this season has just made its appearance, poising itself daintily before each of my neighbor's petunia blossoms which are visible from my window. Each year we have a pair of humming birds which must nest somewhere in the neighborhood and which make daily visits to the flowers. They seem to be late comers, for it is always along about harvest time that they are first noticed. Almost always they are on the wing, moving forward, backward, up and down, as no other bird can, but occasionally one of them may be seen perching on a twig, and sometimes I have been able to approach within six or eight feet of one without disturbing it.

THIS IS ABOUT THE TIME OF the year for the hawk moth which is often mistaken for a humming bird. Anyone who had a bed of four-o'clocks on the garden may see toward evening dozens of hawk moths hovering around the blossoms, of which they appear to be fond. Occasionally friends have written me telling of seeing whole flocks of humming birds, which were really moths. The humming bird which we see is the brilliantly colored ruby throat, which is the only representative of the species in this part of the United States. There have been listed some 400 species of humming birds, all confined to the western hemisphere. While their food is partly the honey which they extract from flowers, it consists more largely of insects which are attracted to the blossoms.

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DRY ICE IS A MODERN CREATION which is put to a multitude of valuable uses. It is a solidified gas, carbon dioxide, which remains solid at a temperature of about 100 below zero but resumes its gaseous form at higher temperatures without melting into liquid as ordinary ice does. Because of its low temperature it may inflict serious "burns" if brought into contact with the skin, and if placed in a closed receptacle it is likely to burst the container. Children have been injured, sometimes fatally, while playing with it. A bulletin on the subject says:

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"DRY ICE IS NOT A TOY. IT is not enough to warn your children against it: whenever you bring it into the house, be sure it is placed well out of their reach, until it has dissipated itself. In the interim do not handle it yourself with bare hands.

"Never try to chill drinking water with it. Floating particles may be swallowed with dire results. Don't chew dry ice no matter how hot you may be. Last summer a foolish mother gave her infant a piece of dry ice to suck on. The baby died.

* * *

"FINALLY, DON'T EVER PUT dry ice into any container that is securely closed. The pressure that is rapidly built up inside the container can't help but burst the thing into smithereens. This does not mean that carbon dioxide gas is explosive—on the contrary it is one of the finest fire extinguishing agents known. But in that field it is confined to special steel cylinders capable of withstanding a great pressure.

"The sum and substance of the story is that dry ice is a boon to humanity when employed with a knowledge of its potential powers. But mishandled, it will get more and more thoughtless people into trouble."

THE CULTURE AND MANUFACTURE of tobacco being one of the major industries of the United States, its taxation being one of the important sources of revenue,



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and its consumption being one of our most prevalent and agreeable vices, the history of tobacco should be of some importance. It is so considered by the publishers of an expensive quartet of volumes on the subject, the material having been selected from a vast collection of works on tobacco in the library of George Arents Jr.

* * *

THE ARENTS COLLECTION contains hundreds of books, pamphlets and other publications on tobacco, dating back to the first printed reference to the subject known to have been made. That was in a book published in 1507, 15 years after the first voyage of Columbus. One interesting fact is that no reference to tobacco has been found in the works of Shakespeare, although Bacon referred to the subject several times and displayed interest in the possible medicinal value of smoking. Of course that will not convince those who believe that the works of Shakespeare were not written by Shakespeare, but by Bacon. They have hurdled higher obstacles than that.

* * *

VALUABLE MEDICINAL PROPERTIES have continued to be ascribed to tobacco for many years, and this fact is responsible for much that has been written about tobacco. A list in the Arents collection shows more than 100 maladies for which tobacco was claimed as a remedy. Tobacco farming was big business in Virginia in revolutionary days and long before. But we are told that the tobacco grown by

Washington and his predecessors and now grown generally in the south was not native to the United States at all. The native Virginia tobacco was hot and acrid, but John Rolfe, the man who married Pocahontas, brought from the West Indies seed of the milder tobacco that grew there, and that seed became the source of all the commercial tobacco that has been produced in the United States. The first commercial shipment of tobacco made from Virginia to London was made in 1613 and consisted of 2,300 pounds.

* * *

NEW YORK TAX AUTHORITIES have a smuggling problem on their hands since the New York state tax on cigarettes went into effect. New Yorkers bring in cartons of cigarettes from Jersey City, where there is no state tax, and some of the untaxed cigarettes are peddled surreptitiously. But in the time of Queen Elizabeth a few cents more or less in the cost of the tobacco in a package of cigarettes would have been considered a small matter, for in that early period fine tobacco sold for as much as \$120 a pound, due allowance being made for ratio of money value.

* * *

A VERSE ON TOBACCO which was taught to many children years ago runs like this:
"Tobacco is a filthy weed
That from the devil did proceed.
It fouls the breath and soils the clothes,
And makes a chimney of the nose."

Now to fill my pipe and reflect on the next paragraph.

* * *

I HAVE JUST RECALLED A cartoon which was published along about the beginning of this present machine age. The picture showed a farm yard with a strange looking piece of machinery speeding across a field, throwing dirt right and left, and the farmer's wife running toward the house, waving her arms frantically and crying, "Henry! Henry! Come out quick! The automobile plow's broke loose an' headed for the corn field!"

THE FLYING BOAT CARIBOU, which brought across the Atlantic the letter which made the journey from London to the Herald office in three days, (picture of the envelope in Wednesday evening's Herald) is the ship used by Imperial Airways to establish a mail route reaching across the continent through Canadian territory. The service will carry mail and passengers from London across Ireland to Newfoundland, thence to Montreal, Winnipeg and Vancouver. Ultimately it will be extended to Australia and New Zealand, to India and back through Europe to the home port. Paralleling its route across the continent is the Trans-Canada highway, which awaits only the completion of the gap along Lake Superior from Schreiber to Sault Ste. Marie. When that is finished one may drive through Canadian territory on graveled or hard-surfaced roads from Halifax on the Atlantic to Vancouver on the Pacific.



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* * *

IT WAS WITH SINCERE REGRET that I learned of the death of Joseph D. Scanlan, publisher of the Miles City, Montana Star. Joe and I worked together on the old Grand Forks Plaindealer and then on the Herald. He was a young chap then, active and irrepressible and bubbling over with enthusiasm. He had a decided flair for politics and during one session he was chief clerk of the house of representatives in Bismarck. For a short time he and Ernie Kent were associated in the publication of a little Grand Forks weekly called the Review. Joe then moved to Montana, acquired the Miles City Star and developed it into a valuable property. He became an important factor in Montana politics and for several years was Republican national committeeman from that state.

* * *

SCANLAN HAD A KEEN sense of humor, as his associates

on the Herald had occasion to know. George B. Winship, owner of the paper, and W. L. Straub, at that time editor, were about as different in manner and temperament as two men could be. Winship was genial and affable, Straub witty and critical. Both had attended a show at the Metropolitan one evening. Later in the office Scanlan asked Straub what he thought of the show. "Not much good," replied Straub. "Is that so?" said Scanlan. "Mr. Winship thought it was good." He hadn't spoken to Winship about it. "Oh, I suppose he would," said Straub. "He'd like anything."

Scanlan then waylaid Winship and asked his opinion of the show. "I thought it was first rate," was the answer. "Straub didn't like it," said Joe. "That's natural," said Winship. "Straub wouldn't like anything."

Then Joe made it a point to circulate the story of both conversations, to the delight of everybody, including Winship and Straub.

* * *

I HAVE ENJOYED FEW books as I enjoyed "Good Bye, Mr. Chips" when it was first published, and I have enjoyed few plays as I enjoyed the film version of the book the other night. Seldom is a play so faithful to the spirit of the book on which it is based. In this play the spirit and atmosphere of the book were retained perfectly, it seemed to me. The play has neither histrionics nor vapid sentimentality. Robert Donat does a remarkable piece of acting as the character whom he portrays age from scene to scene, retaining all the while the spirit of a hero and unquenchable love and understanding of the hundreds of boys whom he guides, stimulates and inspires.

* * *

THE DIRECTOR HAS DONE what most of us would have deemed impossible in training the scores of boys in the cast to be, not play-actors, but just boys, human, mischievous, generous and impressionable, and as one sees groups of them at the beginning of the World war the illusion of the screen is lost and one seems to be observing real life, and to know that many of those joyous lads are soon to experience all the horrors of war, from which only some will return.

THERE IS SOMETHING FAMILIAR about the statement that farmers whose pastures have been destroyed by drouth are to be supplied with seed for summer seeding by the department of agriculture, but to most readers there is a certain sense of strangeness about the fact that this aid is to be given, not to those who have suffered from drouth in the western "dust bowl" but to those in states along the Atlantic seaboard. It is a little difficult to adjust one's thought to the idea of drouth in states where we have been accustomed to think of water as abundant, and the experience must be decidedly novel to the easterners who have experienced it.



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RAINFALL, LIKE MANY OTHER things, is relative, and a given number of inches of precipitation may mean a dry season in one area and a wet one in another. North Dakota's normal annual precipitation ranges from about 20 inches in the Red river valley to about 15 inches along the western border. New York, New England and adjacent states expect about 40 inches a year. But in much of that eastern territory this year the precipitation has been less than in North Dakota, and July in the east was as dry as any spot in North Dakota.

* * *

THERE HAVE BEEN MORE rains recently in the east, but until the heavier downpours of the past few days they appear to have done little good. Park authorities in New York say that their principal effect was to stimulate the growth of ragweed and crab grass on the lawns, while the grass is still brown. This is in spite of the fact that millions of gallons have been poured onto the lawns through fire hose. I have no doubt that other local residents have noted, as I have done, the unusual prevalence of weeds in their lawns. Probably the cause is similar. Our dry July checked growth, and the occasional light showers served to stimulate the growth of shallow rooting plants, while the deeper grass roots were not reached. Fortunately, most of the weeds which have sprung up are annuals, and many of them are prevented from going to seed by the lawn mower. Crab grass, however sticks close to the ground, and the lawn mower does not catch many of the seed heads.

ALWAYS AND EVERYWHERE there have been insect pests. But usually each pest is kept more or less in check by something which preys upon it and a rather stable balance is thus maintained. But occasionally a new insect arrives from abroad and threatens with complete destruction everything that it attacks. On the destructiveness of these foreign pests J. S. Houser, of the Ohio agricultural experiment station, writes:

* * *

"FREQUENTLY, WE ARE asked why the pests of foreign origin are so much more destructive than our native forms. The answer is simple. When an insect has inhabited a region for a long time other insects as well as birds and animals adapt themselves to prey upon it and in time decrease its numbers to such an extent that its capacity for harm is much reduced. Let me cite a specific example. This spring in many parts of the eastern United States ugly webs of the apple-tree tent-caterpillar were seen in abundance on wild cherry, wild apple, and other trees. This is a native insect which becomes plentiful at infrequent intervals only. Four tiny, wasplike insects are known to parasitize and destroy the eggs from which the caterpillars hatch and 24 different kinds of insects destroy the larvae and pupae. In addition, birds and animals consume large numbers of the moths as well as both pupae and larvae. The present outbreak will be short lived. Already the natural enemies are at work and will soon reduce the pest to insignificance. There will follow a series of years when it will be almost, but not quite eliminated. When the tent caterpillar becomes scarce, wholesale death of the parasites occurs by starvation. The host insect gradually rebuilds its members."

* * *

A WEEK OR MORE AGO A reader brought to the office several specimens of a weed which he had found growing profusely along the railroad right-of-way and in several patches in the city. He thought it might be marihuana. I doubted it, but as I am not familiar with marihuana I forwarded a sample to the agricultural college. Professor C. A. Stevens, of the botany department, sends this reply:

* * *

"THE PLANT WITH YOUR letter of August 3 is Smooth Catchfly (*Silene fabaria*), and has no resemblance to or connection with marihuana. It is a biennial, rather recently introduced from the Mediterranean region, and seems to thrive in gravel, so that we find it chiefly along roadsides or in old gravel pits. It is a great seed producer but has shown no inclination to take over ordinary fields."

IN A MESSAGE TO YOUNG Democrats meeting in Pittsburgh President Roosevelt served notice on the entire Democratic party though some of the implications of that notice remain obscure. The feature that is not obscure is that if the Democratic convention next year should nominate for president a man whom Mr. Roosevelt deems conservative or reactionary he will not give his support to the party in the ensuing campaign. That much has been suspected. It has been generally accepted that a conservative candidate would be given no support by Roosevelt, and the statement just made merely confirms what has been believed all along.



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* * *

OTHER ELEMENTS IN THE situation have been doubtful, and the president's statement does nothing to remove that doubt. It is certain that Mr. Roosevelt will use all the influence at his command to cause the convention of his party to nominate a presidential candidate who represents the Roosevelt point of view and the Roosevelt policies; who seeks the objectives sought by Roosevelt and is prepared to use the Roosevelt methods to attain them. But will he seek the nomination for himself? On that question the message sheds no light.

* * *

THE MESSAGE STATES WHAT Roosevelt will not do if his party nominated a conservative, but it is silent as to what he will do in that event. Certainly he will not support the Republican candidate, whoever that candidate may be. In the last presidential campaign Al Smith "took a walk" which led him right into the opposite camp. Roosevelt will not walk in that direction. Will he sulk in his tent, like the ancient warrior, or will he head a new party and split the Democratic party as Theodore Roosevelt split the Republican party in 1912? These are questions concerning which there has been considerable interest for some time, and the message to the Young Democrats leaves them unanswered.

* * *

IT BECOMES INCREASINGLY clear that unless the Republicans commit unpardonable blunders it will take extraordinary strategy to save the Democratic party from defeat next year. The cleavage within its ranks is too wide and abrupt to be easily bridged over. The nomination of Roosevelt himself, or of anyone whom he may choose, would be bitterly contested in the convention by such men as Garner, Byrd and Glass, and no assistance

could be expected from them in the campaign. Roosevelt has declared his attitude toward all those of the Garner group, and it was not necessary for him to mention names.

* * *

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE World war steps were taken by the federal government to provide for the future of service men by issuing to each of them what amounted to an insurance policy guaranteeing payment of a lump sum at the end of 20 years. Annual contributions by the federal government, plus interest on an actuarial basis, would realize that sum at the end of the period. That was proposed in lieu of a general pension. When the bonus payment bill was under consideration, providing for payment in advance of the due date, it was predicted that before long a movement would be started for a general pension. Such a movement, at present sporadic, has been started, and the national commander of the American Legion, Stephen F. Chadwick, has issued a statement to all Legion groups, warning them against this movement and urging them to discourage it. He points out that federal expenditures on behalf of World war veterans already total eleven billion dollars, with the current year's appropriations amounting to half a billion. He asserted that effort for a general pension will inevitably jeopardize the interests of disabled veterans, who should be given first consideration.

* * *

DURING THE LAST WEEK Europe has been the scene of war maneuvers of every imaginable kind. Armies have marched and gone through all the evolutions of war. Bombing planes have flown over great cities in an effort to drop theoretical missiles of death, and other planes have soared aloft to intercept the deadly messengers. There have been rehearsals in railway concentration, lights have been turned out over great areas in anticipation of air raids. The movements have been of actual war save that there has been no bloodshed. Whenever I read of such things I think of the futility of it all—human beings rehearsing the slaughter of other human beings.

* * *

YET WHAT SHALL BE DONE about it? Somewhere influences are at work menacing human lives and the beneficent institutions which human society has developed. And, if civilization is to be saved, the aggressor must be held in check. That can be done only by the application of force or such a demonstration of force as will convince him that his own methods cannot be made to prevail. Prayer and fasting have their value in their influence on the individual soul, but when a dangerous wild beast is abroad one gets a gun.

EVERYONE WHO DRIVES AN automobile knows that it takes more power to start a car than to keep it moving after it has started. It is that way with a train, and railway managers know it costs money to stop and start a train both because of the additional expenditure of energy involved and because the wages of train crews run on during the minutes that the train is standing still. A committee of the Association of American Railroads has been collecting information during the past five years to determine in dollars and cents what it costs to stop a train. The committee has just made its report.



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* * *
NATURALLY THE COST VARIES with the size and type of train, running speed and several other factors, but the committee finds that the average cost of the briefest stop for an eleven-car passenger train is 60 cents and six minutes of time, while for an 89-car freight the cost is \$1.45 and nine minutes time. If a 2-10-4 locomotive handling a train of 6,450 tons of 80-ton cars on a level track is stopped from a speed of 45 miles per hour, the energy wasted represents 345 horsepower hours of work, the cost of which is \$2.08, and, including the fuel burned during a six-minute stop, is increased to \$2.37.

These stops are such as are made in the ordinary course of operation. The committee did not add in its report, as it might have done, that when one train is stopped by running head-on into another the cost is materially increased.

* * *
WHILE 23,000 SOLDIERS were preparing for military maneuvers on the battlefield of Manassas, Virginia, or Bull Run, a Plymouth Rock hen made a nest on the field and laid an egg in it. Due care was taken not to disturb the nest while officers' tents were erected there, one tent being placed on each side of the nest. Each day the hen returned and laid another egg, until, as the story was sent out, she had laid five. Perhaps before the war is over she will have hatched a brood of chickens.

* * *
WHEN THE FIRST IMMIGRANTS from Europe, and especially from Britain, came to America they found many birds and animals similar in appearance to those which they had known at home, and they gave them the same names. In many cases the names were wrong, the creatures differing in species from those of the old country, but the names have stuck and the practice has caused

many inaccuracies which are pointed out in a report from the Field Museum in Chicago.

* * *
THE BIRD COMMONLY called a robin is not a robin, but a thrush. A real robin is a small British bird, one-third the size of our so-called robin, and only distantly related although superficially alike in having a red breast.

The real partridge is European, and has been introduced in some places in America where it is often called the "hunky" from its proper name, Hungarian partridge. Our bob-white is called partridge in the South, and the ruffed grouse is called partridge in Canada. In the Middle West the bob-white often is called a quail, which is confusing because the true quail is a European bird that migrates to Africa.

* * *
JUST TO MAKE THINGS A little more complicated, our ruffed grouse is sometimes called pheasant in the East—a term that is properly applied to the long-tailed "ringneck" introduced from Asia.

What we call a warbler does not belong to the true warbler family at all. The true warblers are Old World birds. America has only one native species of warbler, but it is called a blue-gray gnat-catcher instead of a warbler.

* * *
OUR SO-CALLED ORIOLE IS really a blackbird, unrelated to the true orioles which are an Old World family unrepresented in the Western Hemisphere. Likewise, our meadow-lark actually is a blackbird. However, America's only true lark is, for a change, called prairie horned lark — some one slipped and failed to give it a wrong name.

Even that common little street gamin, the English sparrow, is not a sparrow by any means—it is a species of weaver-bird, an immigrant first brought from Europe in 1850.

* * *
IN FLORIDA LIVES A TURTLE which is misnamed a gopher. There also is a gopher (the little mammal called a gopher in the North) and they call that a salamander. They have a true salamander and they call that a "Con-go eel."

* * *
COLIN C. SANBORN, CURATOR of mammals, contributes the note that what is called a prairie dog in the West is a ground squirrel, and in Illinois a ground squirrel is called a gopher, but out West is a real gopher that they call a gopher, of all things, and a ground squirrel that they call a ground squirrel.

What one calls a ground-hog is no relative of the pig, but is also a ground-squirrel or woodchuck.

Then, of course, there is the classic misnomer pointed out to every schoolchild — the American buffalo which is not a buffalo but a bison, very distinctive from the true buffaloes of Africa and Asia.

LAST WEEK-END WAS MARK-
ed by major tragedies. In Nevada
one of the modern streamlined
trains was wrecked, almost cer-
tainly as a result of sabotage, and



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20 persons were killed and some
114 injured. A seaplane carrying
12 passengers and a crew of
five landed on the water in the
harbor of Rio de Janiero, struck a
submerged dredge, swerved
into a dock and burst into flames.
Fourteen persons lost their lives.
Sixteen persons were hurt in the
derailing of a train running to
Coney Island. These were in addi-
tion to accidents, some of them fa-
tal, involving lesser numbers. It
was a bad week-end.

* * *

BECAUSE OF THE PRACTICE
that has grown up of grouping
and tabulating casualties over
week-ends and on holidays there
has developed a sort of impression
that there is something peculiarly
hazardous about holidays of any
kind. Usually there are more cas-
ualties on such days for the obvious
reason that more people are
abroad, subjected to the hazards
which are present, not only on
holidays, but on all other days.

* * *

THE PLANE WRECK IN THE
Rio harbor seems at this distance
to have been due to someone's in-
excusable negligence. The plane,
bearing its human freight, alit on
the water just as usual after its
flight and had begun to taxi to the
dock when it struck the dredge,
which, apparently, was not marked
in any way. Such an accident can-
not properly be listed as one due
to a hazard of air travel.

* * *

THE STORY OF THE OPERA-
tions attending the raising of the
submarine Squalus contains one
feature mystifying to a landsman
half the width of a continent from
the scene. We are told that after
the sunken craft had been raised
from the bottom and was being

towed to shallower water it struck
an obstacle in the form of an un-
charted mud bank and operations
had to be delayed until additional
pontoons were brought into serv-
ice and the submarine had been
raised far enough to clear. At this
distance it seems that the sensible
thing would have been to make
sure of the character of the bottom
along the course to be followed be-
fore beginning to tow. That's what
a farmer would have done in the
old days when his team got mired.
But perhaps they have different
regulations in the navy.

* * *

IS THERE TO BE AN AWAK-
ening to recognition of the scenic
values of our rivers? The Minnea-
polis Star-Journal thinks that the
Mississippi in the vicinity of Minne-
apolis has been too long neglected.
Most of the literature dealing with
the big river has dealt with it in
its lower stretches, while people
have regarded the upper river
merely as something to get across.
The article maintains that the river
itself has attractiveness which
should be recognized and enjoyed.

* * *

THE RED RIVER AT WINNI-
peg comes in for its share of at-
tention. The Free Press tells of its
beauty and urges that steps be
taken to maintain it and to re-
move whatever now disfigures it.
The paper suggests the creation
of a Red river association devoted
to that task. It points out that ex-
cellent opportunities for boating,
canoeing and river sports in gen-
eral are being overlooked, and that
there are ugly spots whose removal
would add immensely to the pic-
turesque features of the city.

* * *

A YEAR OR TWO AGO A WIN-
nipeg visitor to Grand Forks took
a boat ride on the Red river here.
He had lived in Winnipeg many
years but had never before been on
the river. He said that never be-
fore had he realized what a beau-
tiful stream the Red river is. I
suppose that of the thousands of
persons living in Grand Forks not
five per cent have ever seen the
Red river except from a bridge or
one of its banks. Yet, viewed from
a moving boat it is a stream of fas-
cinating beauty. We ought to make
more use of it.

THE OTHER DAY DR. ISAAC S. Corn of Bloomington, Ill., who has been lecturing at the summer school for ministers at Wesley college, took Mrs. Corn and the



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two children to the state mill because he thought it would be interesting for them all to inspect a modern plant of that kind. They found it exceedingly interesting and were glad they took the time to make such a visit. The joke is that though the Corns lived in Grand Forks for 10 years while the doctor was an instructor in Wesley college, and the mill was there all the time, they never visited it. Like most Grand Forks people, they intended to, but never got around to it. They had to wait until they had moved to Illinois.

* * *

THAT KIND OF EXPERIENCE is common everywhere. In Boston years ago Dr. Corn took two high school girls from out west to see the Bunker Hill monument. With them was a Boston lady, a friend of Dr. Corn's, who had lived all her life in Boston but had not yet seen the monument. A man whom Dr. Corn knew in Illinois, at the age of 70 made a special trip to Niagara Falls to see the grand spectacle. He had been born and raised within 18 miles of the Falls, but had to go back from Illinois to get his first view.

* * *

IN CHICAGO LONG AGO, HAVING time to spare, I dropped in at the Art Institute. I found it so interesting that I spent the entire afternoon there. That evening at the home of a Chicago friend, being asked to give an account of myself, I told where I had been. My friends had lived in Chicago for many years, and had always intended to visit the Art Institute, but hadn't done so yet. They would, some day. I'll bet they haven't.

* * *

ONLY A FEW RESIDENT NEW Yorkers have ever visited the Metropolitan museum. Lots of them have never seen the Atlantic

ocean, and plenty of others have never seen Central park. Those things can be done at any time, so they are deferred. The out-of-town visitor has no such choice. With him it is now, or perhaps never.

* * *

EVERY LITTLE WHILE WE read of some Tennessee or Kentucky mountaineer who, at the age of 80 or 100, has just had his or her first ride on a railroad. Of course there are many districts in the United States remote from railroads where even adults have never seen trains. But even in a place like Grand Forks, where everyone is accustomed to the sight of trains it wouldn't be hard to find young people well along in school age at least, who have never yet ridden on a train. They may have traveled and visited large cities, but their traveling had been done by automobile.

* * *

MY FIRST RAILROAD TRAVELING was at the age of two years, in the company of my mother and my grandmother. Not until I was about 16 did I board a train again. It was a novel and interesting experience. I was alone, and, as I had to change cars at a junction where many trains came and went, I was fearful that I might take the wrong train. In order to avoid having to ask questions I checked my carpet bag, and when we stopped at the junction I went forward and watched for the unloading of my bag. When it came off I followed it and boarded the train on which they put it. Fortunately for me, the railroad people didn't put my bag on the wrong train. I followed that practice for several trips, until I got the run of things.

* * *

SOME MONTHS AGO THE appearance of an albino robin prompted comment in this column on albinos in general. Over in the Lassen national park in California they have a young albino deer which interests naturalists because of what appears to be its complete absence of color. The fawn is wild, and is being studied at a distance through glasses. It appears to be a perfect white, even to its hooves, which are usually black. It is seen in company with its mother and a twin of its own size, both of which are of normal color. This is one of the first, if not the first albino deer recorded in California.

A FINE SOUVENIR PROGRAM of the Golden Jubilee program at Bismarck in recognition of the fiftieth anniversary of statehood is



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being distributed by the committee in charge of the program. F. G. Orr, veteran newspaper man of Bismarck has had charge of the preparation of the program, which is described as of 32 pages 9x12 on enamel white paper with a canary ripple cover printed in blue. Briefly it will contain the daily program, pictures of the old the new capitol buildings, a list of the parade entries, a list of the historical window displays, a pioneer history and interesting facts, a list of the patrons who have financed the celebration, a description of the pageant episodes depicted and the cast of 850 including a chorus of more than 200 and a band of 60 pieces.

* * *

THESE PROGRAMS ARE sold at 15 cents each, and undoubtedly many persons, even of those who cannot attend the celebration, will wish to have them as souvenirs of the occasion. Copies may be obtained from Mr. Orr, Box 625, Bismarck.

* * *

CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION has been given in wild life bulletins to botulism in wild ducks, a disease popularly known as "limber neck" because of the neck paralysis which attends it. Not long ago a news story from Lake Kenmare told of hundreds of ducks lying on the shores of that lake, incapacitated from this disease. One bulletin attributes the disease to a poison taken by the ducks in their search for food in the bottoms of shallow and stagnant bodies of water. Under certain conditions, especially during drouth, organic impregnated in alkali mud undergoes changes from which highly toxic elements are generated, and ducks feeding in such places become dangerously and often fatally affected. The only treatment which seems to be at all effective is the injection of fresh water.

SOME ONE HAS TWISTED AN old proverb into the statement that "it's a long worm that has no turning." It would be irreverent to call the dignified New York Times a worm, but whatever its biological classification, the Times has turned in protest against the sort of representation of newspaper men common on the screen. Attention of the movie people has been directed to the subject, and we are told that there has come from the Hays office a demand for a different type of newspaper story which will be more nearly in accord with the facts of life. Expressing gratification over this new trend the Times says:

* * *

"IT HAS ALWAYS COME WITH a shock of surprise to newspaper men to see how they were portrayed on stage and screen. While they secretly enjoyed thinking of themselves as not quite like other men, the picture drawn in Hollywood was a little too strong to stomach with complete pleasure. Even to such sections of the public as never knew a newspaper man or visited his office, there must have been something faintly unbelievable about the riotous manner of life which was offered. Newspaper men themselves have been partly at fault in allowing this unreal picture to flourish; they have not been so energetic as they might have been in making it clear that the usual day of the newspaper man is perhaps not much more exciting than some other office worker's day. A fair number of reporters and editors lead lives at work, and among their families, that are based on catching the 8:03 in the morning and returning home on the 5:10 with their lives wholesomely devoid of any special frenzy or dissipation. Today's standards of quality, the competition within a newspaper's own staff, and from other papers, demand a constant alertness, accuracy and competence that a zig-zag journalist cannot supply.

* * *

NEWSPAPER MEN KNOW there is plenty of drama in their work. Every day is different, touches new lives and new events, and makes necessary a persistent struggle to record the action swiftly and well on the printed page. Newspaper men will await with interest a sincere effort by Hollywood to present a picture that they can recognize as lifelike."

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S announcement of his intention to November 30 as Thanksgiving day has stirred up a veritable hornet's nest, and angry buzzings are heard all over the country. Of course the president cannot make any holiday legal except in the District of Columbia save as the states by advance legislation may provide that whatever day is appointed by the president shall be legal as to the particular states taking that step. Otherwise the legal Thanksgiving day is whatever day the governor or the legislature may select. Heretofore it has been the custom for the states to follow the president's lead, and since Civil war days presidents have followed the lead of Lincoln in designating the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving day.



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THE CUSTOMS OF NEARLY a century are not necessarily binding, but neither are they lightly to be set aside. The first colonial Thanksgiving day was celebrated on February 22, 1631. Since then the days are set apart for that purpose have occurred in every season of the year. But for the people of the United States the last Thursday in November has been fixed as Thanksgiving day about as firmly as the 25th of December has been fixed as Christmas day. To interfere with that custom was certain to invite protest.

OBVIOUSLY, ONE DAY WILL do as well as another for the purpose of rendering thanks. But while Thanksgiving day is observed by many of the churches as a day on which to give thanks, only a small minority of the people observe the day by attending such exercises. The indisputable fact is that for the great majority the day is not a holy day, but a holiday, observed with family gatherings, excursions, sports and games and in other ways associated with abstention from ordinary labor.

THE PRESIDENT ACTED, HE says, in response to the request of merchants who thought it would be better for business to have five weeks rather than four intervene between Thanksgiving and Christmas. But, if secular considerations are to govern as the president seems to think, the proposed ways will operate in ways which have not been taken into consideration. School schedules, often prepared a year in advance, are based on Thanksgiving being held at the usual time. Thanksgiving day is the great football day of the year. Games are scheduled for that day because of the expectation of attendance impossible except on a holiday. Journeys are planned and family gatherings arranged often months in advance. To change the date of the holiday on such short notice will cause unutterable confusion.

THE DATE OF THANKSGIV-

ing moves with the eccentricities of the calendar. That fact is the basis of one good argument for the World calendar, which would cause the same day of the month to fall on the same day of the week year after year. This year the last Thursday in November falls on November 30. Last year it fell on the 24th. If the last Thursday but one is to be the date, the holiday may be on the 17th, the 23d, or any day between.

PROBABLY THE PRESIDENT will stick to his plan. It never occurs to him that he may be wrong. His action in this case appears to be one of those impulsive things so characteristic of him, in which he jumps at conclusions without accepting or seeking advice. Its practical effect will be to disrupt thousands of plans made long ago, and to have different parts of the country observing two different Thanksgiving days. Apparently the North Dakota law provides that the president's proclamation shall govern in this state.

I WAS ASKED THE OTHER day if I thought there would be war. Nobody supposed that I knew anything about it, but the thought is uppermost these days, and the question is often asked. I replied "No, I don't think there will be war—and I hope I'm right." That is about as far as one can go. Belief must be modified by reservations, and it may be strengthened a little by hope. I think of Poe's story of "The Pit and the Pendulum," in which a man, found on a cot, watched a heavy pendulum swing back and forth above him. Attached to the pendulum was a keen-edged blade, and at each swing the pendulum dropped a fraction of an inch lower. Soon, he knew that blade would cross his body. In like manner civilization awaits what from some standpoints seems to be the inevitable catastrophe. The man in the pit was rescued in an almost miraculous manner. Perhaps civilization will be rescued.

A SOLUTION OF THE world's problems which seems not to have occurred to anyone else is that the nations apply to their affairs the methods which they have employed in their war games. Most of the leading nations have staged such games to determine their capacity for offense or defense. It has been shown that under certain conditions the Panama canal could or could not be destroyed, and certain conclusions have been reached concerning the bombing of London, the strength of the Siegfried and Maginot lines, and so forth. Why not go into war games on a grand scale, with all the armies and all the navies of the world engaged. But instead of killing each other, let them merely go through the motions, and let each gamester be credited or debited with marks according to his achievement, the marking to be done by an impartial board or experts. Then, when the issue of the game is determined, let settlement be made on that basis, let the armies be disbanded and everybody go back to work. It would be a lot cheaper and more pleasant that what is in prospect.

AT THE RECENT MEETING of the American Youth congress in New York a vote was taken on presidential preferences. The balloting resulted: Roosevelt, 904; LaGuardia, 58; Dewey, 56; Hull, 18; Taft, 24; Vandenberg, 24; Garner, 4. If the Youth congress is representative of the nation, it's all settled, and Roosevelt is as good as elected in 1940, and by a tremendous majority. But the one-sidedness of the voting indicates that the Youth congress doesn't represent the nation. The congress was composed of delegates from a score or more of groups which are affiliated with the Youth movement, some quite intimately, some very loosely. The delegate to such a gathering is apt to be an energetic and ambitious young person, eager to participate in movements which seem to him liberal and progressive, who gets himself elected a delegate because of personal popularity or through skillful political engineering. As a rule those who elect him don't know what it's all about, and are not particularly interested.



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ANOTHER REASON WHY IN any such gathering Roosevelt is likely to receive many times the number of votes cast for any other person is that the contest is one against the field. Because of its peculiar composition any such gathering as that of the Youth congress is pretty certain to lean strongly toward the New Deal. And Mr. Roosevelt is the outstanding representative of the New Deal. In that capacity he has no competitors. Inevitably, under the conditions which existed he would receive a big vote, even though a majority of the members of organizations technically represented at the congress might be opposed to the New Deal and its sponsor.

THE COUNTRY HAS LEARNED to be wary of national polls on any subject. The early Literary Digest polls were marvels of accuracy, yet see what happened. Although the Digest's last poll indicated a smashing Republican victory, the party was literally snowed under. While charges were made concerning that poll, as well as others, that it was biased, those charges have never been substantiated, and no reasonable explanation of the colossal failure of that poll has ever been given. But very largely because of it the Digest folded up.

THE LITERARY DIGEST WAS one of many periodicals which failed to hold their own under the stress of competition from sources which had not existed during their earlier years. For many years the Digest was a weekly compendium of news and commend from all over the world, and from its columns one could learn what was being thought and said about almost every major subject of current interest. Other magazines came into the field, more flashy, more journalistic and more opinionative, and the Digest followed suit. Then it became a piece of flotsam, drifting nither and thither, until it landed on the rocks.

LOOKING BACK FIFTY YEARS or so one can recall as outstanding examples of literary excellence the Atlantic, Harpers, Century and Scribners. More than any of the others the Atlantic has remained true to its traditions, but it has yielded to pressure. Harpers has slipped, and Century and Scribners, after struggling with new style and new form, are numbered among the things that were. Century was absorbed, and Scribners just quit. The magazine output generally has been cheapened, and some of the more recent arrivals have been able to do little more than make their initial bows and exits.

THE OLD MAGAZINES WERE read, perhaps because there were not many of them, also because other printed matter was less abundant. Today there is less reading and more looking. We want to get the gist of everything at a glance, and that which demands attention and thought is apt to be discarded. Our reading has become wider and much less deep.

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VICAR JARDINE, THE ENGLISH clergyman who defied his superiors and performed the marriage ceremony for the duke of Windsor and Mrs. Simpson, is



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not having a happy time. He is living in California in a cheap little apartment, without occupation and without regular income. Unable to obtain a church engagement in this country, he seems to think that his church has ganged up on him because he refused to be bound by ecclesiastical shackles. He tried radio when he first came to this country, but failed at that. He thinks he may be driven to the cinema. He is a man with a deep-seated grievance.

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AT THE TIME THAT THERE was such a pother over the prospective marriage of the duke and his lady, and people were speculating over who should wed them, and whether anyone could be found to do the job, there was a round of applause when the doughty little vicar came forth and volunteered for the service. But there were some misgivings when the vicar came to the United States and immediately went on the air to tell the world all about it. If he had been content to perform the service and then subside he would have been credited with both the spirit of independence and a generous desire to help others out of a tight corner. But his radio effort created the suspicion that back of his apparently generous act was the motive of self interest, and that he had planned his coup with the idea of converting his notoriety into American dollars. That suspicion has not been removed, and because of it, people lost interest in him. He could have got away with the marriage ceremony alone quite nicely, but it will take him some time to live down his subsequent performance.

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HELEN KELLER, DEAF AND blind, has a new dog. Two years ago, while she was touring Japan, her dog guide died. To console her the Japanese state department requested the police of the city of Akita to train for her a dog of the breed named after the town. Kazan Go, a promising pup-

py, was taken in hand, and his training was completed a few months ago. He was received by Miss Keller in New York last week. Miss Keller has five other dogs, and as a precaution against hostilities, Kazan Go has been introduced to the others one at a time. Friendly relations are being established gradually. The new dog has been accustomed to a diet consisting largely of rice. That is being continued, but gradually other food is being substituted, and presently he will be living on a regular American diet.

* * *

MARIAN ANDERSON, THE famous colored contralto who sang in Grand Forks last winter, was given a medal at Richmond, Virginia, recently. The medal is one given annually by Joel E. Spingarn, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to the American negro who "shall have made the highest achievement during the preceding year or years in any honorable field of human endeavor."

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PRESENTATION OF THE medal was made in the city which was once the capital of the southern Confederacy, and it was made on behalf of the society by the wife of the president of the United States. Last spring, on account of her color, Miss Anderson was refused the use of an auditorium in Washington. Later she sang in the great Lincoln Memorial before an audience of many thousands, and seated on the platform were several of the most distinguished figures in the nation—a quiet, but forceful protest against the cavalier treatment to which the singer had been subjected.

* * *

WHAT IS SAID TO BE THE largest flower in the world bloomed in a New York park not long ago. The plant is known as the Giant Krubi, and its single blossom measured four feet in diameter, which would be something to carry in your lapel. The bulb, or corm of the plant was brought from Sumatra, whence several specimens have been brought to England and the United States. None of the imported plants has bloomed more than once, and after blooming the bulb has died. Care is being taken of the New York plant by maintaining soil and atmospheric conditions as nearly as possible like those in its original home. It is hoped that in this way new bulbs can be obtained from the original one, and that the plant may gradually be acclimated.