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THAT IS A FINE FILM WHICH THE
Great Northern is circulating throughout its territory. The territory served by the Great Northern is veritably an empire in extent and resources. It is a fine thing for all of us to have our attention directed to the magnificence of the territory which we inhabit.

This great empire did not come by chance. For uncounted centuries it remained uninhabited save for a few scattered Indian tribes. Its soil was as fertile then as now, its great forest as splendid, and buried in the earth were great stores of minerals. But all this potential wealth remained unused until James J. Hill dreamed his dream and then took steps to make his dream a reality.

* * *

BUT EVEN HILL’S VISION, HIS DETERMINATION AND HIS PRACTICAL GOOD SENSE COULD NOT ALONE HAVE CREATED AN EMPIRE OUT OF A DESERT. HILL POINTED THE WAY AND MARKED OUT THE PATH. THEN OTHERS CAME, ALSO WITH IMAGINATION AND COURAGE, AND CONTINUED THE WORK WHICH HE HAD STARTED. AND WHAT A WORK IT HAS BEEN! THE PICTURE ON THE SCREEN, ADMIRABLE AS IT IS, MERELY SUGGESTS THE REALITY. THE RICHES THAT LAY HIDDEN AND UNTouched FOR AGES HAVE BEEN RELEASED FOR THE BENEFIT OF MILLIONS. FARM, FOREST AND MINE MAKE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO HUMAN INDUSTRY AND HUMAN HAPPINESS.

* * *

I ENJOYED THE PICTURE GREATLY, BUT I CONFESS TO ONE SLIGHT DISAPPOINTMENT. WHEN GREAT FLOCKS OF CHICKENS WERE SHOWN, WITH VAST QUANTITIES OF EGGS, AND SO FORTH, I EXPECTED TO SEE NEXT SOME SHOTS REPRESENTING THE TURKEY INDUSTRY, WITH SOME MENTION OF THE ALL-AMERICAN TURKEY SHOW. I ASSUMED THAT THE GREAT NORTHERN PEOPLE WOULD BE JUST A LITTLE PROUD OF THE FACT THAT ON THEIR ROAD IS LOCATED THE WORLD’S GREATEST EXCLUSIVE TURKEY SHOW, WHOSE AWARDS ARE PRIZED THROUGHOUT A CONTINENT. FOR SOME REASON THIS FEATURE WAS NOT INCLUDED. BUT THEN, WE CAN’T HAVE EVERYTHING IN A PICTURE, AND THIS IS AN EXCELLENT ONE JUST AS IT IS. PERHAPS SOME DAY IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO CUT IN A FEW FEET OF FILM IN RECOGNITION OF THE TURKEY INDUSTRY.

* * *

FIGURES ON BOND AND STAMP SALES FOR JULY WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR SOME DAYS, AND WE HAVE NO MEANS YET OF KNOWING HOW NEAR GRAND FORKS COUNTY CAME TO THE QUOTA SET BY THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT. BUT WHATEVER THE ACTUAL FIGURES MAY PROVE TO BE, THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE COUNTY HAS MADE A GOOD SHOWING.

* * *

IT IS A PHYSICAL IMPOSSIBILITY FOR THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT OR ANYBODY ELSE TO FIX BOND QUOTAS FOR EVERY LOCALITY IN THE UNITED STATES ON A BASIS OF PERECT EQUITY. IT IS A FACT THAT THE AGGREGATE INCOME OF THE UNITED STATES IS FAR GREATER THAN IT HAS BEEN. WITH MORE MONEY TO SPEND AND FEWER THINGS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE THERE IS THE DIRECT TENDENCY TOWARD DISASTROUS INFLATION AGAINST WHICH INVESTMENT IN BONDS IS A VALUABLE SAFEGUARD.

* * *

INCOMES, HOWEVER, ARE NOT EQUALLY DISTRIBUTED. EXTRA EARNINGS ARE GREATEST IN THE GREAT INDUSTRIAL CENTERS. IN STRICT EQUITY, WE SHOULD EXPECT BOND SALES TO BE THE GREATEST PER CAPITA WHERE INDUSTRIAL PAYROLLS ARE GREATEST. AND PROBABLY IT WILL WORK OUT IN SOME SUCH WAY. BUT EXACT APPORTIONMENT IS AN IMPOSSIBILITY. THE ONE THING THAT THE PEOPLE OF A COMMUNITY LIKE GRAND FORKS CAN DO IS TO PUT FORTH THEIR VERY BEST EFFORT, AND IF INVESTMENT IN BONDS CALLS FOR GREATER IMMEDIATE SACRIFICE THAN IN SOME OTHER COMMUNITIES, WE CAN LOOK ON THAT INCONVENIENCE AS ONE PART OF OUR PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE NATION’S WAR WORK.
WHILE WINNING THE WAR IS
the immediate task before the United Na-
tions, no thoughtful person can avoid giv-
ing some attention to the kind of world
that there is to be af-
fter the war is over. We
who are committed to
the defeat of those who
brought the war to pass
and the destruction of
the systems which they
hope to impose upon
the world, must accept
as inevitable a period
of unknown duration
in which we shall real-
ize in our own experi-
ence something of the
meaning of Churchill's promise of
"blood, sweat and tears" to the British
people. But we look confidently for ulti-
mate victory. During the war the ordi-
ary practices of civil life are changed, in
some cases beyond recognition. When at
length civil life is resumed, what will be
the conditions surrounding it?

* * *
WE MAY TAKE IT FOR GRANTED
that the new world will not be precisely
like the old. When a city is destroyed it
may be rebuilt, but it will not be built
exactly according to the former pattern.
In some respects it will be better. Better
buildings will be erected on the site of
old slums; there will be more parks and
playgrounds; and many new devices will
be used to make life more convenient
and comfortable. But some familiar
things, which were prized for their as-
ociations or their picturesqueness, will
be gone forever. Some things cannot be
reconstructed. The new city will not be
quite like the old.

* * *
IN THE LARGER FIELD, TOO,
there will be change. Those who share in
the reconstruction will realize that some
familiar things have been swept away,
ever to be replaced in exactly the same
form. With respect to some of these one
may say "good riddance." With respect
to some others, there will be a pang of
regret.

* * *
IN THE INTERNATIONAL FIELD IT
is fairly well taken for granted that im-
perialism as the world has known it is
ended. For the sake of peace and order,
and in order that all may have oppor-
tunity to enjoy the riches of the earth,
some nations will for a long time exer-
cise some sort of supervision over peo-
ple who have not yet become familiar
with self government. But the colonial
systems which have exercised such a
great influence in the building of em-
pires will never be restored.

* * *
VICTORY BY THE UNITED NA-
tions will mean the extension of freedom
to millions who have never known it, and
where liberty has existed it will be en-
larged. There are evidences of under-
standing of the fact that needless inter-
ference with trade is an enemy of pro-
gress, and among men of high position
there is substantial agreement that the
free exchange of the world's products
is to be aided and encouraged rather than
obstructed.

* * *
THERE WILL BE GREAT SOCIAL
and economic changes. In our own coun-
try there has been a marked extension of
the authority of government over private
enterprise. That process, which began
many decades ago, was expanded in the
belief that its expansion was necessary to
meet the requirements of a period of ex-
traordinary depression. It has of neces-
sity been for her expanded in response
to the requirements of war effort.

* * *
I DO NOT LOOK, AS SOME SEEM
to do, for anything like a right-about-
face in this field after the war. I think
it is a mistake to expect a restoration of
the degree of independence which sur-
rounded individual enterprise decades
ago. It seems much more likely that we
shall retain permanently many of the
controls to which individuals have been
subjected.

* * *
IF THIS IS A CORRECT ESTIMATE,
it seems the part of wisdom for those who
understand and prize individual initiative
and enterprise to adjust their thinking to
the prospect that such enterprise and in-
itiative will be surrounded by some con-
ditions which heretofore they have not
welcomed, but to which they must ac-
commodate themselves. There is no pros-
spect that anyone can prevent the change.
Hence the man of vision will seek to re-
tain in the new order those things which
are basic, while making such adjustment
as he can to other changes which are es-
sentially those of method and not of
principle.
BASEBALL GAMES ARE OFTEN marked by bad luck, sometimes to players and sometimes to spectators. The Chiefs of Grand Forks have had their full share of poor luck this season, and local spectators who have hoped to see the home team win have felt that they were having their share of poor luck. But a Brooklyn man who was neither player nor spectator had his share of bad luck in connection with games played on the Dodgers' own field.

The man is James C. Reid, a retired music teacher, who lives near enough Ebbetts field to be annoyed by the noise that comes from the field when games are being played. For several years he has threatened to sue the Dodgers management for making such an intolerable racket, but thus far his threat has not been carried out. The other day during an intermission in a game the Dodgers band played Mr. Reid's own composition, the "Canzonetta," perhaps as a gesture of friendship, but Mr. Reid didn't hear it. Too far away to hear, he sat in his car waiting for gasoline. When he got home and was told of the compliment that had been paid him he sighed. Just his luck.

* * *

ACCORDING TO A STATEMENT coming from manufacturers of Christmas cards the war motif is to characterize this year's cards. Instead of the portly figure of Santa Claus we are to have the slim, whiskered Uncle Sam, and as substitutes for the sentiment "Peace on earth good will toward men, the cards will bear such slogans as "Trap the Jap," "Paste the paperhanger," and "Muzzle Mussolini." Let's hope that the designers will think better of it before it is too late. The war is with us, and while it lasts there is no escape from it. But surely it is not necessary to lug it deliberately into our Christmas thinking. A great deal has been said about the commercialization of Christmas, and there is room for much of the criticism. But a worse desecration of the day would be to abandon the thought that has usually been associated with it and substitute such cheap frivolity as has been suggested. I am still strong for the old-fashioned Christmas card with its simple message of good will.

VITAL STATISTICIANS HAVE FIGURED out to a nicety that the birth of quintuplets may be expected only once in so many million births—or so many billions, I forgot which. According to that, after the birth of the Dionne girls there ought never to have been another set born for I don't know how many generations. Yet seven years after the birth of the Dionnes an Irish mother has given birth to five children at one time. The fact that two of them died immediately after birth does not change the fact that the births actually occurred. Still, the statisticians may be right. The slot machine jackpot comes down only once in a great number of times on the average. Yet one jack pot does actually follow another quite closely once in a while. But in the long run the law of averages holds good.

* * *

THERE ARE SAID TO BE TEN thousand Japs in the Aleutians. That is just about ten thousand too many, and the more quickly they can be ousted the better satisfied most of us will be.

* * *

CLAIMS MADE FOR EXPENSES OF various kinds in connection with the attempt to exclude William Langer from the senate have been whittled down materially, but payment of the actual sums allowed will cost the country a pretty penny. Naturally it would be unfair to the man against whom charges are filed to put him to the expense of defending himself against charges which may have no merit whatever. If that were done there would be an incentive to file charges against a man just for spite. But the moral of such cases is that the senate ought not to consider such charges unless there is a pretty clear showing in advance that they have merit.

* * *

SENATOR NYE INTENDED TO spend a week or so in North Dakota in the near future, but he has decided to stay in Washington so that he can attend to pending legislation. That's the right idea, and North Dakota can afford to wait for his visit.
ARE AMERICANS MORE ADDICTED TO HERO WORSHIP THAN OTHERS ARE, AND IS OUR MOBBING OF CELEBRITIES DUE TO TOT SPONTANEOUS SENTIMENTALITY OR TO THE BALLYHOOING OF PUBLICITY AGENTS? Whatever the answers may be, there are nauseous exhibitions of poorly developed mentality in the mauldin demonstrations over persons who have become conspicuous in some more or less sensational manner. Perhaps some of the central figures in such demonstrations enjoy them because vanity has insatiable appetite. Often such shows are promoted for commercial purposes and the celebrities are nauseated by the displays of hysterical adulation.

* * *

IT MAY BE THAT THE ORIGINATORS OF THE IDEA OF A "PARADE OF HEROES" ACROSS THE COUNTRY EXPECTED TO AROUSE PATRIOTIC ENTHUSIASM IN THIS MANNER, BUT THE SOLDIERS AND SAILORS WHO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH A DISPLAY ARE TO BE PITIED. YOUR REAL HERO DOES NOT WILLYING MAKE AN EXHIBITION OF HIMSELF, AND HE DETESTS BEING PLACED ON DISPLAY BY OTHERS. IT IS SAFE TO SAY THAT MEN WHO HAVE GIVEN GALLANT SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES OF THE NATION AND ARE MANEUVERED INTO POSING PUBLICLY AS HEROES WOULD A THOUSAND TIMES RATHER BE WITH THEIR COMRADES AT THE FRONT, BLAZING AWAY AT THE ENEMY. TO THEM POSING AS HEROES MUST BE A THOROUGHLY ARDUIOUS AND DISTASTEFUL DUTY.

* * *

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE ADVISES INSURANCE COMMISSIONER ERIKSON THAT HE CANNOT LEGALLY HAVE A PRIVATE TELEPHONE INSTALLED IN HIS OFFICE IN THE CAPITOL AT BISMARCK EVEN IF HE PAYS FOR IT HIMSELF. THE RULING IS THAT THE INCUMBENT OF A STATE OFFICE CANNOT DO JUST AS HE PLEASES WITH THE PHYSICAL PROPERTY OF THE STATE. THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION WAS CREATED TO HAVE CHARGE OF THE CAPITOL AND OTHER PUBLIC BUILDINGS OF THE STATE. THE BOARD WAS DIRECTED BY THE LEGISLATURE TO INSTALL IN THE CAPITOL A CENTRAL TELEPHONE SYSTEM, THE INTENT BEING TO HAVE TELEPHONE CALLS TO AND FROM THE CAPITOL RESTRICTED AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE TO THE BUSINESS OF THE STATE. IF MR. ERIKSON WANTS TO TALK TO HIS FARM FROM BISMARCK HE CAN USE A PAY STATION.

* * *

WHEN GASOLINE RATIONING IN THE EASTERN STATES WAS FIRST PUT INTO EFFECT THE REASON GIVEN WAS GASOLINE SCARCITY IN THAT AREA. THE COAST TRADE HAD BEEN SUPPLIED LARGELY BY TANKERS, AND WAR CONDITIONS HAVE CURTAILED THAT SERVICE. OTHER MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION ARE INADEQUATE, HENCE THE SHORTAGE. BECAUSE THERE WAS NO SHORTAGE IN THE MID-CONTINENT AREA THERE WAS NO OCCASION FOR RATIONING.

* * *

SINCE THEN A NEW REASON HAS BEEN ADVANCED FOR RATIONING, NAMELY, THE NEED FOR CONSERVATION OF RUBBER. THERE SEEMS TO BE GOOD SENSE IN THE ARGUMENT THAT ON THAT BASIS RATIONING SHOULD BE NATIONWIDE. THE WEARING OUT OF A TIRE IN NORTH DAKOTA OR TEXAS USES UP JUST AS MUCH RUBBER AS IF THE TIRE WERE WORN OUT IN PENNSYLVANIA.

* * *

TIRES WEAR OUT, BUT IT IS SURPRISING WHAT AN INNER TUBE WILL STAND. NOBODY NOW MENDS HIS OWN TUBES, BUT IN THE EARLY DAYS OF AUTOMOBILING IT WAS ALMOST NECESSARY THAT THE DRIVER BE ABLE TO MAKE HIS OWN REPAIRS, AND ALMOST EVERY CAR CARRIED A LITTLE VULCANIZING OUTFIT WITH WHICH TUBE INJURIES COULD BE REPAIRED ON THE ROAD. I KNOW ONE MAN WHO HAD A TUBE PRICKED IN MANY PLACES SO THAT IT LEAKED LIKE A SIEVE. TODAY IT WOULD HAVE BEEN THROWN AWAY AS THE COST OF THE MANY PATCHES REQUIRED WOULD HAVE BEEN GREATER THAN THE VALUE OF THE TUBE. BUT TUBES WERE COSTLY AND THE MAN HAD PLenty OF SPARE TIME. HE STARTED VULCANIZING AND BEFORE HE GOT THROUGH HE HAD MENDED 22 HOLES. THE MENDED TUBE WAS AS GOOD AS EVER AND IT LASTED SEVERAL YEARS, UNTIL THE CAR WAS TURNED IN.

* * *

A FRIEND OF MINE WHO HAD OCCASION TO DRIVE OVER THE TIMBER ROADS IN NORTHERN MINNESOTA FOR MANY YEARS MADE IT A POINT ALWAYS TO AVOID A PORCUPINE WHEN HE SAW ONE. INADVERTENTLY HE HAD STRUCK ONE OR TWO, AND HE SAID THAT FOR HIM HITTING A PORCUPINE MEANS BUYING A NEW TIRE IMMEDIATELY. THE TINY TIP OF QUILLS WOULD REMAIN IMBEDDED IN THE RUBBER OF THE CASING AND WOULD BE QUITE INVISIBLE. PRESENTLY ONE WOULD WORK THROUGH AND PUNCTURE TUBE. A LITTLE LATER THERE WOULD BE ANOTHER PUNCTURE, AND SO ON, TIME AFTER TIME, AND THERE WAS THE CONTINUAL DANGER OF BEING CAUGHT WITH A FLAT TIRE AT A CRITICAL TIME.
IT WAS WITH SINCERE REGRET that I read of the death of Harry Cooper, who passed away at his home in Kenmare, where he had practiced law for many years. Harry came to the Herald as a reporter in the first decade of the century, shortly after graduating from the University. He had been a good student and had won honors in his college work and he fitted himself readily into newspaper work. He was thoroughly dependable and always faithful in the performance of his duties. But his preference was for the profession of law and he retired from the newspaper to take up that work. In the many years that have passed since he established himself at Kenmare I have seen him only once or twice, but I have heard about him often, and always with pleasure.

* * *

HARRY’S FATHER, THE REVEREND H. P. Cooper, was one of the pioneer ministers of the state. He has served in remote mission stations where population was small and the whole environment was of the most primitive character and the work involved long drives over difficult roads in inclement weather. He had held city pastorates, and for several years he was a district superintendent of his denomination, the Methodist church. I knew him well and found him both a warm friend and a useful acquaintance.

* * *

I OFTEN TOLD DR. COOPER THAT he ought to have been a newspaper man instead of a preacher, for he had in unusual degree the qualities of a news gatherer. He was intensely interested in everything that went on about him, and with the instinct of a reporter he noticed many interesting things which others would not have observed. His work as district superintendent called for much travel, and it was his custom on returning from one of his trips to drop in on the Herald and report. Invariably he had a good drist of news, news of crop conditions, civic-improvements and incidents affecting the lives of those whom he met. He sought no publicity for himself, but enjoyed for its own sake reporting on the life of each community that he visited. I suppose that if I should pore over the files of the Herald published during his ministry I should still be able to identify scores of items the substance of which was communicated by Dr. Cooper.

* * *

IN TRIALS IN NEW YORK THE ADVOCATES of the spray method of extinguishing incendiary bombs were put to rout by those of the jet school. Under test conditions a bomb was sprayed into harmlessness in 63 seconds and another under like conditions was put out in 15 seconds by a jet of water. Even Mayor LaGuardia, who had held to the spray theory, had to confess defeat.

* * *

AT DENVER THE OTHER DAY INSTEAD of sending the fire department to a fire they took the fire to the department. Several miles out of town it was discovered that a car of lumber was on fire. The city fire department was notified by phone and the train kept right on going. When the blazing car reached the yards the fire department was there with all the necessary equipment and the fire was quickly subdued. Maybe there is a suggestion in this for our fire department. I wouldn’t know.

* * *

COLONEL ROBERT L. SCOTT, COMMANDER of an American plane squadron en route from India to China, detoured his own plane to fly over Mount Everest, which has never been scaled by man. He flew a mile higher than the peak, whose altitude is more than five miles. That was an interesting stunt, but still, the peak has not been scaled. Some day it will be, for it will stand as a challenge until somebody climbs to the top.

* * *

AN INVENTOR NOW PROPOSES the building of a combination plane and dirigible for freighting and transportation of regular planes. Just how the two are to be combined is not explained. The thing doesn’t seem feasible to me.
Specially praiseworthy service in the war. The order is a blanket one, obviating the need for special permission in each separate case.

AN ARRANGEMENT HAS BEEN made whereby men receiving glider training at the local field will be available during spare time for farm work, harvesting grain, picking potatoes, etc. The men welcome this arrangement as something different from ordinary training routine and it will enable them to earn a little extra money, which is always welcome.

IF ONE WERE WRITING A BOOK and should include in it a story the exact duplicate of that of the saboteurs who landed on Long Island and Florida beaches critical readers would say “Fantastic! Impossible! Dick Tracy Stuff!” and people would wonder why writers of fiction didn’t stick more closely to the possibilities. Yet the whole thing is true. Time after time we have it demonstrated that truth is stranger than fiction. More than one writer of fiction has refused to work into his or her book some authentic incident from real life on the ground that nobody would believe such a thing possible.

THE OTHER NIGHT WE HAD IN A few minutes the greatest downfall of rain that has fallen in a similar brief period for a long time, and, as usual, some sewers were overloaded and some basements were flooded. I suppose nobody ever yet built a sewer system capable of taking care of all the rain that falls in extreme cases. A useful precaution is to plug basement drains when there is prospect of trouble, but that doesn’t work when one is away from home.
THERE ARE MANY THINGS ABOUT gasoline and rubber that I don’t understand. It is clear that there is a shortage of rubber. Ninety per cent of our rubber came from the East Indies, and now that supply is completely cut off. We are using up what was on hand before Pearl Harbor, and presently that will be exhausted. We have not yet been making enough synthetic rubber to make up for the shortage. Existing supplies must be conserved for the use of the armed forces and for such civilian uses as are absolutely indispensable.

* * *

ALL THAT IS QUITE SIMPLE AND it leads naturally to the rationing of rubber so that material necessary for war purposes shall not be wasted in mere pleasure driving. That rationing is already in effect. But there are further plans for general rationing of gasoline as a means of restricting driving, or for the restriction of mileage which may be driven. Therein appear puzzling complications.

* * *

TAKE THE CASE OF CITIZEN Jones, who may live anywhere in the United States. He owns a car which he drives to his office when he could as well walk or use a bus, and he drives occasionally for pleasure, which it is not necessary for him to do. He has four good tires on his car, and a spare. Under rationing regulations, when those tires are used up he can’t get more. His car must be laid up.

* * *

IF JONES HAS ANY SENSE HE will be mighty careful about his driving. Gasoline or no gasoline, he will make those tires last as long as possible. But if he hasn’t sense, drives like a fool and uses up his tires in a few weeks, why should the government care? Jones’s tires are not doing the army or navy any good and they are not being used in an essential industry. And if Jones has to walk, why should the government worry? The only logical reason for government concern over the condition of Jones’s tires seems to be that the government intends to requisition them for its own use. If that is the case, why doesn’t it requisition them now while they are in good condition?

* * *

AND ANOTHER THING. IF, FOR some mysterious reason, it is necessary to limit driving, that can be done in either of two ways, by rationing gasoline or by applying the rationing system to driving itself. There is controversy in Washington over which plan should be adopted. So far as the wear and tear on tires is concerned it makes no difference, provided the regulations in each case are strictly enforced. But enforcement of direct mileage regulations would seem to be immensely more difficult of the two.

* * *

TO INSPECT PERIODICALLY the speedometer of every car and check up on its mileage would require the employment of a whole army of men who can be put to much better use. Some of the people in Washington seem to realize that and suggest that obedience be left to the drivers themselves. There are too many elastic consciences to make that plan at all promising. Rationing of gasoline would be fairly simple and would serve the same purpose. When the driver has a card entitling him to so many gallons of gas per week or month he can drive just so many miles on that quantity. If he does his driving all at once he will be out of luck and the government needn’t worry.

* * *

GASOLINE RATIONING AS A means of conserving oil is an entirely different matter, and that applies to conservation of oil in all its forms. In the whole country there is plenty of oil, but the eastern states are distant from sources of supply and much ocean transportation has been cut off. The difficulty there is not that of basic supply but of transportation. The mid-continent area is not yet affected in the same way, but no one can tell what the future has in store. It may be that for the conservation of oil, the rationing of all kinds of oil will be necessary. But so long as tires are rationed other rationing in order to save rubber seems to be unnecessary.
PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT HAS APPOINTED a three-man commission to investigate the rubber situation. This commission is headed by Bernard M. Baruch, who gave conspicuous service as head of the war industries board in the former war, and associated with him are two men whose standing in science and economics is such as to command confidence and respect. The board is directed by the president to make a quick but accurate survey of the whole rubber situation with respect to the needs of the nation and also with respect to the best method of providing the rubber which will be needed during the nation’s war effort.

* * *

IN HIS LETTER TO BARUCH THE president referred to the controversy which has existed over rubber and to the conflict over questions of fact which has involved not only civilian groups but agencies of the government itself. The commission is directed to proceed immediately to ascertain the facts and to report its findings as soon as possible. The inquiry will cover both the production of rubber as such and the manner in which it may best be produced with the least interruption of other services which are essential at this time.

* * *

AT THE SAME TIME THAT HE APPOINTED this commission the president vetoed the bill recently passed by the senate under pressure from the farm bloc creating a separate agency for the production of rubber with one of its major bases alcohol derived from farm or forest products. This measure was opposed by the president and the heads of all the government agencies directly affected on the ground that it would divide responsibility in a situation where unity is imperative, but both house and senate disregarded the pleas of the war department, of Nelson, of the War Production board, and others and pushed the measure through.

* * *

APPOINTMENT OF THE RUBBER Inquiry commission is a step which is certain to be generally applauded, and the personnel of the commission is entitled to warm commendation. A pertinent question at this time is: Why was not such a commission appointed weeks or months ago? The facts which the president cites in his statement have been matters of common knowledge for a long time. Special interests have been quarreling and hurling accusations at each other, and in the absence of authoritative and impartial findings opinion throughout the country has been confused and uncertain. The people have wanted information, but the information that has come to them has come from those who have special interests to promote, and such information is therefore subject to suspicion. Time after time the demand has been made for an impartial investigation by an impartial body of competent men, but that appointment, now made, has been delayed until body branches of congress have committed themselves to a course to which the administration is diametrically opposed.

* * *

THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE that if such a commission had been created earlier the bill which the president has just vetoed would not have been passed. The farm bloc insisted that nothing was being done about rubber, and while that was not true, it was true that nothing satisfactory was being done to clear up the confusion that surrounded the facts. If a competent inquiry had been instituted the excuse of “nothing doing” could not have been used to influence sentiment in favor of the farm bloc bill. An indication of what would have been the effect of earlier action is seen in the statement by sponsors of the vetoed bill that they will not move for passage over the veto until the commission has rendered its report. If the commission had been appointed when it should have been the bill might not have been proposed and certainly would not have been passed until the findings of the commission were known.

* * *

IT IS NOT TRUE, AND IT NEVER has been true that nothing was being done about rubber. Plants are now in operation producing synthetic rubber, some from oil and some from grain, and the operations of these plants are being expanded and other plants are in process of construction. What the direction of this expansion is to be, and what proportion of rubber shall be produced from the respective bases are matters for expert decision and not for conflict by private interests, each desiring to wring the greatest possible commercial advantage out of a war in which the maximum energy of the nation shall be devoted to the development and use of military strength.
NEWS IS RECEIVED OF THE DEATH at his home in Stamford, Conn. of Joseph Oliver Dahl, editorial director of several hotel magazines. Mr. Dahl was the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Dahl of Fargo and became widely known in North Dakota, as he served the major part of his apprenticeship in North Dakota hotels.

Stamford dispatch in announcing his death says that in 1923, while assistant manager of a small hotel in Minot, N. D., he won a contest conducted by the publishing company for the largest number of practical ideas for improving hotel business. The prize was a trip to Europe and six months' training in the Vendome Hotel, Paris. On his return Mr. Dahl was hired by the publishing concern.

He was readers' service editor and editor of Hotel Management before attaining his last position.

MR. DAHL WROTE THIRTY-TWO manuals, handbooks and management books for the hotel and restaurant business the sales of which exceeded 500,000 copies.

In 1927 Mr. Dahl estimated he had then traveled more than 36,000 miles and worked, studied and eaten in 571 hotels and 789 restaurants. During this time he ate 4,527 meals in eight countries in Europe and 29 states and three territories in America.

Mr. Dahl worked in the Comstock Hotel in Morehead, Minn.; the Annex in Fargo, N. D.; the Adion in Berlin, the Grande Derussi in Rome and the Suvretta House in St. Moritz, Switzerland.

He was a member of the Hotel Greeters of America.

A CASS COUNTY FARMER THRESHED 37 bushels of wheat per acre from half of a 30-acre field. The wheat weighed 62 pounds per bushel and had 14 per cent protein. Such a yield is considered remarkable, and it is nearly three times the average. Actually there have been many greater yields. Forty bushels per acre is not unusual on the newer lands of the Canadian northwest. The fact that Red river valley soil which has been cultivated for many years can be made to produce at that rate suggests that some day, under intensive and scientific cultivation, we shall be producing as much wheat as at present on half the present acreage.

WHILE THE GREAT LANES ARE subject to tidal influences, local influences are so much stronger that real tides are practically imperceptible. The lower end of Lake Michigan, however, had something the other day strongly resembling a regular tide, for which no explanation has yet been found. Suddenly the water along the beaches south of Chicago began to recede and continued to do so until the water level had been lowered two and a half feet. Then the "tide came in until the water was two and a half feet above normal. The lowering of the water left long stretches of beach dry that had always been covered with water. Then when the water rose five feet it sent bathers gathering up their belongings and scurrying for safety. Some small bathing buildings were wrecked and clothing that had not been watched was swept away.

LAKE LEVELS ARE CONSTANTLY changing under the influence of the winds. I have understood that this condition is more noticeable on Lake Erie than on the other lakes, probably because of the relative shallowness of Erie. Under the influence of changing winds the water is piled up first at one end of the lake and then at the other. Occasionally during prolonged easterly winds the water has been driven from the eastern end of the lake until scarcely any is left to flow through the Niagara river. In the case of the Lake Michigan freak no unusually strong wind from any direction was reported. Observers are speculating on the possibility of some under water earth movement otherwise not noticed.

CEDRIC ADAMS IN A RECENT SUN-
day Minneapolis Journal says something to this effect: "Nothing peeps a man up like loosening the top button of his pants and rearranging his shirt tail."

Someone comments that this makes one feel sorry for the women, whose attire is so constructed that they cannot perform the exercise described.
PUBLICATION OF "OLD TIMES" articles is a familiar practice among newspapers. That practice was followed so long ago that the publication itself has now become a matter of "old times." It was so when in the year 1900 the Minneapolis Times published a Sunday supplement a detailed account, with elaborate illustrations, of the execution at Mankato in 1862 of the 38 Indians and half-breeds who had been condemned to death for participation in the New Ulm massacre and other outrages incident to the Indian uprising in the summer of that year.

* * *

JUST THE OTHER DAY SIX MEN convicted of treasonable conspiracy against the United States were put to death in accordance with the decision of the military commission which had tried them, which decision had been approved by President Roosevelt. There could scarcely be a greater contrast than that between the surroundings attending that execution and those surrounding the execution of those Indians 80 years before. Not only were the saboteurs executed in strict privacy, but the fact that they were to be executed was not officially made known. Not until the men had been put to death was the decision ordering their execution made public, and the record of the hearing leading to their conviction and sentence was immediately sealed, its contents not to be disclosed until after the war. The Indian execution was made a great spectacle, witnessed by as large a crowd as could assemble in that then sparsely settled country, with a cordon of troops surrounding the scaffold from which the 38 men were hanged at the same moment.

* * *

ONE REASON FOR THE PUBLICITY attending the Mankato hanging was that it might serve as an object lesson to other Indians who might be inclined to make trouble. As in most cases of conflict between whites and Indians, there were faults on both sides. Indians had been defrauded by rascally traders and they had other legitimate grievances. Among them were habitual trouble-makers who used those real grievances as means for fomenting disorder. Many of the Indians refused to join in the uprising, and at great risk to themselves assisted in shielding white families. One of these was Otherday, the fine old Indian who conducted the Fadden family (later of Grand Forks) to safety, and after whom the infant child John Otherday Fadden was named.

* * *

THE 38 INDIANS WHO WERE Executed were not put to death for resisting the authority of the United States, but for cold-blooded murders and other acts of brutality of which they were found guilty. Their hanging became a matter of history, and the story was told by the Minnesota Times nearly 40 years later as an interesting bit of early history. A copy of the paper was found by J. U. Zirkelbach while sorting over an old collection.

* * *

THE STORY OF THE EXECUTION makes gruesome reading, and the pictures are equally gruesome. One is a sketch of the scaffold, with dangling nooses, drawn by a spectator and preserved as an interesting memento. I suppose there always has been, and probably there always will be a sort of morbid interest in such things.

* * *

OTHER TWIN CITY PAPERS RESUR-rected by Zirkelbach contain numerous reminders that there were other wars in progress around the turn of the century. The British had their hands full with the Boer war, and the United States government was trying to convince the Filipinos that American control of their country for a time would be in their best interest. It will be remembered that the task of convincing them was not an easy one.
AN INTERESTING BOOKLET JUST published by Jim Masterson, of Miles City, Mont., contains a collection of Masterson's cartoons which have been used by several Montana papers under the general title "It Happened In Montana." The cartoons illustrate incidents in the history of one of the most colorful of American states which, in addition to having been under the flags of France and Spain, was at different times part of Louisiana, Missouri, Oregon, Washington, Nebraska, Dakota and Idaho territories. One of Montana's territorial governors, Green Clay Smith, came within one vote of being president of the United States. At the Republican convention in Baltimore in 1864 he was a candidate for the vice-presidential nomination. His rival was Andrew Johnson. The vote was a tie and the chairman cast the deciding vote for Johnson, who became president upon the death of Lincoln.

* * *

ILLUSTRATED BY THE CARTOONS are deeds of some of the early desperados and the fate which overcame most of them; the silver statue of Montana exhibited at the Chicago World's fair in 1893, for which Ada Rehan posed, and all trace of which has been lost; the wooden safe built by an ingenious Chinese in early gold mining days, and which was such a good imitation of the real thing that nobody disturbed it; and numerous other facts and incidents culled from actual records.

AMONG OTHER THINGS THERE IS a drawing of the toll bridge on Smith's fork of Bear creek, on which was posted in the early sixties the following notice: "No vehicle drawn by more than one animal is allowed to cross this bridge in opposite directions at the same time."

Masterson is to be congratulated on the production of an entertaining feature which must have required a lot of digging in addition to the task of drawing the pictures, which are well done.

* * *

THE PRINCIPAL ARTICLE IN THE July number of "North Dakota Outdoors," official publication of the state game and fish department, is devoted to the beaver, a valuable fur animal once numerous in North Dakota, then threatened with extinction, and now, under state protection, rapidly increasing in numbers. On the basis of close and extended observation the article gives information which upsets several familiar beliefs. We are told, for instance, that the beaver does not use his broad, flat tail as a rudder, as many have supposed. The tail is used as a rudder and to slap the water as a danger signal, and it is thought probable that it is sometimes used to carry mud.

* * *

BEAVER HOUSES OR LODGES are commonly supposed to be built in the middle of the pools created by dams which the beavers build. The article says that in the entire state only two or three houses have been found built in such locations. Beaver, we are told, burrow into the banks lining their little lakes and make their homes there. If the bank is not high enough for sufficient overhead the structure is raised by sticks and mud.

* * *

EACH BEAVER DAM, SAYS THE article, does not represent a separate colony, as a single colony may build several dams on the same stream or on tributaries of the main stream. As many as 10 have been found maintained by one colony.

* * *

WHILE EMPHASIZING THE VALUE of the beaver for its fur and for its aid in water conservation, the article concedes that in some circumstances the beaver may become a nuisance. While it used a mixed vegetable diet in which roots, bulbs and glasses are included, the beaver's favorite food is bark, that of the poplar preferred, and trees of all kinds are cut down for use in the dams. In areas where trees are scarce beaver may strip considerable areas. For this reason an effort is made to keep the animals under control, and families are transported from places where they are not wanted to places more suitable for them.
ARE YOU ADDICTED TO SERENDIPITY? Many persons are. In case you do not happen to know what the word means, Dr. Leslie Hotson of Haverford defines it as the capacity for discovering things you aren’t looking for. According to Dr. Hotson the word was coined about 1754 by Horace Walpole in a letter to a friend. Walpole said that the word was suggested to him by reading a fairy story entitled “The Three Princes of Serendip,” in which the heroes were continually making important discoveries while looking for something different.

* * *

IN THIS MONTH’S ATLANTIC Franklin P. Adams, who is known to the world as F. P. A., conductor of “The Conning Tower,” and as one of the experts on the “Information, Please,” program, begins a witty article with these words:

“It happens that I know almost everything, and one of the things that I know is that it just happens; it is chance, and chance alone.”

* * *

ADAMS HAS ASTONISHED THOUSANDS, and probably millions, by the extent and variety of his information, and he explains that most of the things that he knows have been learned while looking for something else. He reminds us that in this he is not alone; that Columbus was looking for India, Hudson for China, and Marconi for something entirely different from the radio programs that he made possible when he made wireless a practical thing. Those men were practicing serendipity without knowing it.

* * *

THE WORLD IS FULL OF THINGS whose discoverers were looking for something else. Long ago men studied the stars in order to learn from their movements what the future held in store for this world and its inhabitants. They did not find the messages which they sought, but out of their studies was born the science of astronomy and much of our knowledge of the universe. Other men sought a philosopher’s stone which would enable them to transmute base metals into gold. They didn’t find it, but they laid the foundations of the science of chemistry which, in important ways has revolutionized human life. Serendipity played its part there.

* * *

ON CHECKING UP ON MY OWN habits I find that serendipity plays an important part in them. I open the dictionary or a volume of the encyclopedia to find the meaning of a word or to learn something about a particular subject. In turning the pages I find other words which attract my attention and my search may be diverted into a dozen different channels. Sometimes I become so interested in the following branch lines that I never get back to the main track. I forget what it was that I started to look for. Meanwhile I have acquired some bits of information, mostly useless, but frequently interesting, through the process of serendipity. Just now, without looking for it, I have found out what “serendipity” means. Probably the knowledge will never be of any use to me, but it is one of those things that I found when I wasn’t looking for it.

* * *

THE BOOK THAT SUGGESTS THE word to Walpole was fiction, but the island of Serendip was real. A writer in the Musical Leader says that the island of Ceylon was known to the Greeks and Romans by the name of Taprobane and later as Serendib, which is a modification of the original Sanskrit.

* * *

EVERY LITTLE WHILE ONE RUNS across a man who wants the United Nations to win this war provided he doesn’t have to do any fighting, and who wants ample funds collected to further the nation’s war effort so long as he doesn’t have to pay any of the taxes and his customary way of living is not disturbed.
A COPY OF THE ST. PAUL PIONEER PRESS for September 27, 1899, contains an account of the arrival in New York of Admiral Dewey, fresh from his success at Manila. Dewey expressed disappointment that the insurrection in the Philippines had not yet been suppressed, saying:

"I thought that this thing in the Philippines would be over long before this, as it should have been. I can't imagine how they have stood until now. Of course, there was the rainy season, and I suppose little was done. One great trouble out there has been that Gen. Otis has tried to do too much. I told him so. He wants to be general, governor, judge and everything else; to have hold of all the irons. No man can do this. This is the great trouble. It is enough for a man to do one thing—to be one thing—but when a man tries to do everything and to be everything is it easy to imagine the result."

It will be noted this present war is not the first in which a leader has been criticized for wanting to run the whole show.

* * *

IT WAS SUGGESTED TO THE ADMIRAL that the Democratic slate had been settled with Admiral Dewey for the presidency and Gen. Wheeler for the vice presidency.

"Well," said the admiral, "we should make a pretty mess of it. Gen. Wheeler, of course, has has some training in the political school, but then he is a West Pointer. I had forgotten that. He would want to run everything as he would a regiment, and, of course, would make a splendid mess of it. You cannot run a government as you would a regiment."

"Well, admiral," suggested the reporter, "it would not be such a change from the ship Olympia to the ship of state."

"Yes," said the admiral, "it would be a very great change.

"I am not a politician. I am a sailor. My training has been all that way. I am at home on board my ship. I know my business, or at least should know it, and I do not want to mix up in the affairs of government. I am perfectly satisfied to live and die a simple sailor who tried to do his duty. I am not a politician. I cannot make a speech, even. I wish I could, but I have to be content with my lot."

* * *

UNfortunately FOR HIS PEACE of mind Dewey yielded to the urgent appeals of some of his admirers and became a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, and his failure to win it caused him severe disappointment, from which he never quite recovered.

* * *

EVERYONE COMMENTS ON THE rapid and luxuriant growth of everything in field and garden. In town the lawns are kept green without sprinkling, and every householder who has a bit of lawn is kept busy cutting the grass. Did you ever stop to think how many thousand gallons of milk and tons of butter are represented by the grass that is carried off the lawns of Grand Forks in a growing season like this and destroyed?

* * *

YEARS AGO THERE WERE SEVERAL men with teams who made the rounds of the alleys and gathered up clean lawn clippings for their horses and cows. They don't do that any more, and the grass is just wasted. That waste always hurts my feelings, even though I can't do anything about it, for in the family in which my boyhood was spent waste was a capital sin, and among the sayings which were daily fare were "Waste not, want not," and "Willing waste makes woeful want."

* * *

MY GRANDFATHER WAS A RUGGED old chap who had been obliged to work hard for every penny that he earned, and hard experience had caused him to seek to make the most of everything that was usable. On his little farm not a blade of glass was ever willingly allowed to be wasted. Grain fields were raked by hand to make sure that no grain was left lying in the stubble. Every inch of the land was cultivated and not a weed was tolerated anywhere on the place. In that environment I acquired a horror of waste, and I have never got rid of it. I wish there could be some way of saving all that good grass.
ANOTHER OF THOSE ONE-SIDED
decisions which have marked the whole
attitude of the federal government in
controversies involving labor has been
made in the case of a strike in an essential
war industry at Bayonne, N J. There the General Ca-
ble company has been
at work on contracts
for cable for the army
and navy. Employees of
the company, about 1,
000 in number, demand-
ed a wage increase of
10 cents an hour, with
double pay for vaca-
tion periods. The increases were refused
by the company and the case went to the
war labor board.

AFTER HEARINGS IN ACCORD-
ance with prescribed procedure the board
refused to order the demanded increases.
The labor board, high union executives
and officials of the plant’s labor union
appealed to the employees to accept the
board’s decision and continue at work.
The employees voted instead to strike, and
they quit work in a body, crying, “Let
the government take over.” After the
plant has been shut down for three days
the president ordered the navy to take
over and operate the factory. The em-
ployees were enthusiastic, declaring their
willingness to work for Uncle Sam.

THIS CASE IS NO DIFFERENT IN
its essentials from others too numerous
to count which have occurred both dur-
ing the government’s defense program
and in the prosecution of its war program
since Pearl Harbor. Here is an industry
engaged in the manufacture of a product
esential to the efficiency of the armed
forces of the nation and the safety of the
men in those services. Refusing to ac-
cept the decision of a board which has
time and again shown strong partiality
for organized labor, and refusing to heed
the appeals of their own organization of-
icials those employees quit work and caus-
ed cessation of operation in a critical
industry. Thereupon instead of penaliz-
ing those who have thus deliberately ob-
structed the nation’s war effort, the gov-
ernment seizes the plant, ousts its man-
agement and permits the employees to
resume work as if nothing had happened.

IF THE MANAGEMENT HAD RE-
fused to accept the board’s decision and
had closed the doors of the plant and the
government had taken over the plant and
sent to the penitentiary the men respon-
sible for the stoppage, that course would
have been applauded everywhere. But in-
stead, the management, against which
no offense has been shown, is penalized
for the offense of others over whom it
has no control. One of the things needed
in this war is such action by the govern-
ment as will convince employers and em-
ployees alike that no stoppage of work
for any cause will be tolerated, and that
whoever is responsible for stoppage will
have the heavy hand of the government
applied where its force will be felt.

MORE THAN A WEEK HAS PASSED
since the United States assumed the of-
fensive in what appears to be a major
operation in the western Pacific. The at-
tack on the Solomons was undertaken,
not as a cursory raid, but as a strategic
operation for a deliberate and sustained
purpose, and latest advice from the
scene are that thus far the movement
has been successful.

DETAILS OF THE ACTION ARE NOT
available, and the full scope of the move-
ment may not be disclosed for a long
time. But from the fragmentary infor-
mation available it is possible to piece
together some parts of the great picture.
The assembling of such a force as was
necessary for such a difficult and haz-
ardous operation could not be concealed
from the enemy, whose scouting planes
must have observed the ship movements
under way. But it was necessary, in so
far as was possible, to confuse and mis-
lead the enemy as to the objective of the
attack. Hence the raids directed from
Australia by MacArthur against many
positions in the Pacific area, and by
northern units against kiska left the en-
emy in doubt and at the same time were
so co-ordinated with the major movement
as to keep the enemy’s air forces occu-
pied.

THE PLANS, CAREFULLY PREPAR-
ed far in advance, worked out well. The
attack on the Solomons was vigorously
resisted, but the diversion caused by the
other attacks robbed the defense of some
of its strength. Nevertheless, the assault
called for hard fighting and the fighting
is still in progress. This brief experience
in distant Pacific waters suggests some-
thing of the nature of the task facing the
Allies in invasion of the European con-
tinent. The European coast is bristling
with guns and studded with defensive
works of extraordinary strength, and
while the Japanese cannot have had more
than a small force on the Solomons, an
invasion of Europe would be resisted by
one of the greatest armies in the world,
with resources back of it which have
been accumulating for ten years.
A LETTER DATED MAY 30 RECENTLY received by Mrs. L. A. Christianson of Forest River from her sister, Mrs. Charles Gamble, tells of war experiences in India, where Mrs. Gamble holds the position of the Medical Officer of the Indian Army. Mrs. Gamble is the youngest daughter of the late Thomas R. Graham, a pioneer of the Forest River district, and a graduate of the Normal College at the Valley City and Minot Teachers' and Antelope School.

The couple later went to Scotland where Dr. Gamble took graduate work in the University of Edinburgh. Thence he was sent to India with the British troops. Colonel and Mrs. Gamble have spent eight years in India. Last spring while his wife was with him, he was in Burma. Mrs. Gamble was in the hospital in Rawalpindi and the Punjab with pneumonia. Omitting personal and family references her letter is as follows:

=* * *

"CHARLES CAME BACK FROM the war in Burma early in April, and I was delighted to see him. I was in the hospital when he arrived. I think my delayed recovery was due to worry over him, for as soon as he got home I improved better rapidly. Of course I had been through hell worrying about him, for I knew he was in the thick of it and the wireless at one time announced that his division had been annihilated and at other times said they were cut off. The news in Maroo and Rawalpindi was that he had been killed with most of his unit. Of course they didn't tell me that until he returned."

=* * *

"ACTUALLY I WAS CAPTURED one morning, but he escaped three hours after and had to lie in the jungle in the middle of the battle for another three hours. When he escaped the Japs fired at him with rifles from a very few yards range and had about a dozen shots at him too. They didn't even hit his clothes though one bullet burned his ear a little. Another time he was machine-gunned from a plane while driving back the road. The car was wrecked and three othersBorn to be WO: and the instru- ment panel, but Charles got a bullet from his hat only. I guess it was lots of excitement but little fun."

"CHARLES SAYS THE JAPS AREN'T exceptional fighters and when the odds are even we'll trim them properly. He has a tremendous admiration for the American Volunteer Group with the Chinese air force. They are wonderful fliers and concentrate all they have on their jobs. There are quite a few Americans in India now. It will be a good thing for them to see the Indians at first hand and correct the incorrect ideas current about them in America."

=* * *

"WE HAVE LOTS OF COCKTAIL dances here to entertain the troops and the troops back from the fronts overseas. They are called 'Hostess dances' and introductions are unnecessary. They are held at the club and are a lot of fun for everybody. I've met some of the A. V. G. lads at them and it's wonderful to hear the American language. They all have such unobtrusive self-confidence and they certainly think the States is the finest country in the world."

=* * *

"WE HAD A WONDERFUL TEN days at Kashmir after Charles got back. My greatest friend and god-child were there and we laughed our ears off. Another old friend of mine was there. He is a retired general and used to be head
HARDWARE WORLD, A TRADE magazine of national circulation, devotes several pages of its August number to North Dakota, its history and its resources. Material for the article, with accompanying photographs, was furnished by the Greater North Dakota association. Following a brief historical sketch the varied industries of the state are summarized. The illustrations cover not only the wheat industry, which is so large that it is sometimes considered practically the state’s only activity, but dairying, stock raising, mining and merchandising, with many others. The article is excellent publicity for North Dakota.

* * *

THERE ARE LEGAL PROVISIONS to facilitate divorce and remarriage, and one may, and sometimes does, obtain a divorce in the morning and marry again the same afternoon. In such cases the presumption is that there has been a proposal of marriage before the divorce was granted. But it is not usual for a man to make a proposal of marriage to an unmarried lady while his wife is living and the couple are on good terms, with no divorce in prospect. Yet that is what the novelist, Anthony Trollope, did, as shown in a letter from him which was to be offered for sale at an auction of literary curiosities in New York last week. That remarkable letter was written March 24, 1851, to Miss Dorothea Sankey, a young lady of excellent family in Tipperary, Ireland. It reads:

* * *

"MY DEAREST MISS DOROTHEA Sankey, my affectionate and most excellent wife is, as you are aware, still living—and I am proud to say her health is good. Nevertheless, it is always well to take time by the forelock and be prepared for all events. Should anything happen to her, will you supply her place—as soon as a proper period of decent mourning is over?

"Till then, I am your devoted servant. (Signed) Anthony Trollope."

* * *

WHAT RESPONSE WAS MADE TO that strange letter is not known, nor is it known whether it was seriously intended or was an exhibition of a strange sense of humor. At the time that it was written Trollope had been happily married for seven years, and he remained so far many years thereafter. But it would have been quite in keeping with his odd character for him to write such a letter in all seriousness as a means of providing in advance against the unforeseen and undesired event of his wife’s death.

* * *

TROLLOPE WAS A MAN OF CURIOUS habits. Unsettled in his early life, he tried several occupations and failed in all of them until friends obtained for him the position of inspector of post offices, first in Ireland and then in England and Wales. He had a passion for hunting, and the postal job fitted in with his inclinations. It called for much travelling and he was paid on a mileage basis. He traveled as much as possible in order to obtain enough money to maintain his stable of hunters. Yet, with that attitude, he attended faithfully to his job and won high commendation for his efficiency.

* * *

IT WAS NOT UNTIL SOME TIME after his curious proposal of marriage was made that Trollope settled down to steady writing. But when one or two of his earlier books became best sellers of their day, he buckled down to the business of writing as a mechanic would tackle his job. With him there was no waiting for inspiration, no dependence on moods and seasons. He prepared the plan for each book as a carpenter prepares the plan for a barn, then he wrote, so many hours a day, and so many words an hour, until the book was finished. All his methods were mechanical. Judged by some standards, his books are mechanical, as was to be expected, but in the astonishing number that he wrote he created some living characters. Most of his work is forgotten. "Barchester Towers" is the best known. I never read it. I did read his "Doctor Thorne," but it is so long ago and I read it so carelessly that I have forgotten what it was about.
PRESS DISPATCHES BRING NEWS of the death, at Hastings on the Hudson, of Walter Whiteside, who will be remembered with pleasure by those who are left of the old Grand Forks theatre-goers. Whiteside lived to the age of 73, and as he began his stage career at the age of 15, that career spanned nearly 60 years, although he made only occasional appearances during his later years. He first appeared as a youth in Grand Forks as a member of Cora Tanner’s company which played on improvised stage in 1885, five years before the Metropolitan was built. In 1889 he came to the Met as head of his own company in “The Red Cockade.”

* * *

FOR MANY YEARS THEREAFTER Whiteside came to Grand Forks regularly, playing Hamlet, Lear, Shylock and other Shakespearean characters and starring in modern romantic dramas. He had written for him several Oriental plays which were marked by gorgeous settings and by the air of mysticism which prevad- ed them. He was both a gifted and a painstaking actor. His voice, of unusually fine quality, gave evidence of long and careful training, and in heroic parts his acting was so impressive that the audience was scarcely conscious of his small stature. He gave Grand Forks audiences many delightful hours.

* * *

ANOTHER NEWS ITEM IN THE Herald the other day recorded the death of John J. Ryder at the Printers’ Home in Colorado Springs. Ryder was a capable newspaper man who saw service on Twin City papers and for some years was editor of the East Grand Forks Courier when that paper was published daily. He was greatly interested in politics and was a gifted and effective speaker. While he was editor of the Courier he was elected to the Minnesota state senate, where he served. I think, for only one term. During his campaign I took over for him as editor of his paper and for two or three months I worked a double trick, on the Herald at night and on the Courier during the day. The rest of the time I looked after my garden and loafed. Ryder had qualities which would have enabled him to go far, but he was too companionable for his own good.

* * *

THERE HAS BEEN AN INFLUX OF vultures into the Bear Mountain district of New York. Those birds, common in the south, are seldom seen in the northern states. They seem to have been attracted to the New York district through the great increase of the deer population of that section. Deer are so numerous there that they are frequently killed on the highways. Others not killed are struck by passing cars, and, seriously wounded, escape into the timbered land to die. Stray vultures have spotted their bodies and seem to have called in their friends. One resident counted 48 of them perched on a single tree.

* * *

THE VULTURE, NOT A PLEASANT bird to have around, is one of the best fliers in the air. One can soar for an hour without perceptibly moving its wings, having developed remarkable skill in taking advantage of upward air currents in mountainous country. The glider student who could apply the technic of the vulture would be a past master of his art.

* * *

IF WE ARE OBLIGED TO JOIN IN the song, “Yes, we have no bananas” it will not be because there are no bananas, but because there are no adequate means of getting them. Ships that have formerly brought the fruit from the tropics are needed for war freights, and bananas must wait. This may also result soon in diminishing the supply at the source, for people can’t keep on growing bananas when there is no market for them.

* * *

UNTIL THE PRESENT SHORTAGE of transportation bananas were one of the most familiar and popular fruits used in the United States, yet half a century ago there were many American communities where bananas had never been seen. I first tasted bananas in Chicago in 1884. There may have been a few bananas in my town, but I knew nothing about them. But in Chicago it seemed that everybody was eating bananas, on the sidewalks, on the street cars, everywhere. I thought “If these people can eat those things, I can,” and I did.

* * *

FOR A LONG TIME, I THOUGHT that the banana was a strictly American native product, but it appears to be one of the oldest and most widely distributed fruits of the Old World. The authorities are not certain whether there were bananas in the western hemisphere before Columbus. One theory is that stray plants may have been brought by ocean currents to outlying American islands and there taken root, but nobody knows.

* * *

THE FRUIT HAS BECOME OF great commercial importance in the tropical countries where it is not produced, and among some of the primitive island populations it is the principal food. Where people live almost exclusively on bananas they must eat enormous quantities of them to obtain the necessary food elements, and that results in an abdominal protruberance known as “banana belly,” which is a common physical feature on some of the West Indies.
DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE VIL-lage of Bicycle, North Dakota, is? I don’t, but an article in the Christian Science Monitor magazine says there is such a place, and that it is the smallest village in the United States. Its population consists of one inhabitant. R. H. Markham, author of the Monitor article, has this to say about some other small towns and some bigger ones:

* * *

AUTO, W. VA., IS 25 times as large as Bicycle, while Wagon-town, Pa., is twice as large as the Auto and Bicycle combined. Oregon has a Wagonite. It is so small it would hardly fit a kiddycar. How would you address them in a patriotic speech? Would you say “Dear Wagontires, let’s get going”? Altogether, the Wagontires are just enough for one wagon with two spares. Suppose that town had been Autotire instead of Wagonite! It might have been salvaged right off the map.

“Strange to say the 120 Big towns in the United States, from Big Arm to Big Woods, are very small, while many of the 90 Littles are fairly large. Little Rock, indeed, is a couple of thousand times larger than Bigstone—both are in Dixie.”

* * *

ON ROAD MAPS OF THE NORTH shore drive along Lake Superior from Duluth appears the name of Illgen City. A few years ago in driving over that road I noticed a sign bearing this inscription:

“Illgen City. Population 7, and room for more.”

* * *

AN UNUSUAL TRIBUTE WAS RE-cently paid to Miss Zdena Trinka of Lidgervill and her book “Medora” by Orabel Thortvet, a Minnesota artist. Impressed greatly by her book, Thortvet wrote the author a letter of appreciation in which he described his emotion on reading the book. On the envelope enclosing the letter was a beautiful water color painting of the historic Chattrau de Mores, which has been given to the state by its present owner, and which is one of the valuable relics of the early life of the state.

* * *

FOR THE FIRST TIME I HAVE learned the difference between resin and rosin. I had supposed that the two words meant the same thing. But an article which seems to be authentic explains that the gummy substance which exudes from the longleaf southern pine is resin while in the form in which it comes from the tree, but after it has passed through a process of refinement it becomes rosin. The article also says that while this distinction is technically correct it is not generally observed, but popularly both forms are usually known as rosin. That brings me back to just about the place where I started.

* * *

TURPENTINE AND ROSIN ARE OBTAINED from the long-leaf pine, and that industry is one that has been given a tremendous boost by the war. Turken- tine and rosin are known as naval stores. The use of the term dates back to the time when all ships were made of wood and turpentine and rosin were used to make the hulls waterproof. Those substances are still used for that purpose, but many other uses have been added, and there is need for them in many forms associated with the war. To collect the gum the gum trees are nicked, at first near the base, then higher and higher until tapping is done higher than a man’s head. The gum is then distilled. Much of the work is done on a small scale by local inhabitants of the pine country, where little stills may be found here and there through the forest. The product of these small stills is turned over to larger central plants where the processing is finished. In those sections one is apt to find strong antagonism between the turpen-tiners and the lumbermen, as the tapping of the trees on the scale in which it is usually performed impairs their value for lumber. Down in Florida some years ago I heard lumber men invoke curses on the turpentiners for spoiling the tim-ber. The turpentiners retort that they leave the trees standing to produce wealth for years, while the lumber men cut them down and leave the ground naked.

* * *

ESTABLISHMENT HERE OF THE new plant for the manufacture of potato flour has reminded me of the domestic manufacture of potato starch which years ago was a familiar occupation in the eastern farm kitchen. In those days the farm housewife made her own laun-dry starch. While my recollections on the subject are somewhat hazy, as I recall it the process was very simple. The un-cooked potatoes were grated into cold water and the mixture was well stirred. When the solid material was well settled the water was drained off and the residue, dried, was the starch that was used in stiffening shirt bosoms and for similar purposes. And according to my recollec-tion of the white shirt bosoms of those days the starch must have been powerful. When a fellow was encased in a Sunday-go-to-meeting shirt he might as well have been encased in one of those suits of steel armor that they wore in the middle ages.
AS ONE OF THE BY-PRODUCTS OF
the war a lot of us are going to redis-
cover some things which we had pretty
much forgotten and discover some others
that are quite new to us. In recent years we
have been going places so fast that we haven't
seen much as we went. For many all this is
changed. Restrictions on the consumption of gas-
oline and rubber, actual in some parts of the
country, and prospective everywhere, have
stimulated the practice of walking, and to those
who had practically forgotten how to walk a new world is opened.

* * *

NO ONE WILL DENY THAT THE
automobile has its good points. It enables
us quickly and conveniently to visit distan-
t places which otherwise would be in-
accessible, and its aid in the transaction of business is beyond question. But the
very speed at which we have traveled,
and which is excellent for some purposes,
has blurred the landscape and rendered
practically invisible many things which it
would be pleasant to see. The driver
at the wheel of a car going 80 miles
an hour hasn't much time to look at the
scenery, and for his passengers it is
merely a swiftly moving panorama with-
out distinguishable pattern or detail. This
is true even though the choicest bits of
scenery are hidden by billboards — but
that's another story.

* * *

SHORTAGE OF GASOLINE AND rubber will not induce many persons of
walk across the continent instead of driv-
ing, but it will cause millions of people
to walk a mile or two instead of driving
two or three hundred miles. It will also
cause many who still drive cars to amble
along at 20 or 30 miles an hour instead
of rushing along at three times those
speeds. And in the leisurely drive, no
less than in the leisurely walk, many in-
teresting things are to be seen.

* * *

JUST NOW FOR THOSE WHO DRIVE
I recommend a jaunt through small sec-
tions of our own state while harvest is
in progress. Miles and miles of grain
fields stretch before one, some with the
grain standing, thick and strong with
the rich golden hue which tells that it is
ready for the sickle, some with the grain
lying in heavy swaths, ready for the com-
bine, and some so full of standing shocks
that it would be impossible to drive a
wagon among them. Herds of fat, sleek
cattle graze on lush green pastures,
and well-kept farmsteads tell of progress and
comfort.

* * *

ONE RETURNS FROM SUCH A
drive with the feeling that this is truly
a land of abundance, capable of maintain-
ing a type of civilization that is worth
preserving. And if on the way one meets
an acquaintance and the sense of hurry
is not so great as to prevent a stop for
a few minutes and a bit of chat, or if there
is a few minutes conversation with a
farmer who may be a stranger about
some new crop or some unfamiliar op-
eration, there are established contacts
out of which new thoughts may grow
and from which warmer friendships may
spring.

* * *

THEN THERE IS THE EVENING
walk near one's own home. I like to
ramble through and around the newer
residence district south of where I live,
partly because it is so nearby that it can
be reached conveniently. There the homes
are new, none of them more than a few
years old, and all are of modest propor-
tions. Most of them are owned, and many
have been built by their present occu-
pants. Into the building of those houses
have gone the hopes and longings of young couples just setting out in life,
and in the few years that have passed
there has come at least in part the realiza-
tions of those hopes and longings.

* * *

I WALK ALONG THE STREET,
which is lined for block after block with trim, comfortable dwellings, in front of
which are immaculate lawns, with a bit
of floral color here and there to lend life
to the picture. Then I walk through the
alleys and drink in the beauty of taste-
fully arranged flower gardens and ad-
mire the neatness of the little vegetable
gardens. For a real view of the city's
gardens, by all means walk through the
alleys. In such scenes one sees expression
of the love of beauty which under other
conditions is often choked and smothered.
There is the friendly rivalry of house-
holders, each of whom is bound that he
shall not be outdone in making his prop-
erty a credit to the neighborhood. And
there is everywhere the spirit of co-
operation which makes common property
of the knowledge and experience of each
individual. By all means take a slow
drive through the country and leisurely
walk through the alleys.
WAR NEWS OF THE WEEK HAS been more satisfying, notwithstanding the fact that in the biggest battle that is being waged the tide is still running us. Though the Russians are keeping up their vigorous defense, and toward the northern end of the line are apparently holding the enemy, the Germans are continuing their march into the Caucasus and there the Russians have been compelled continually to give ground. But over in the western Pacific American forces have made good their occupation of the Solomon island positions which they attacked more than two weeks ago. That operation, as was pointed out by Admiral King, was a difficult and dangerous one and American casualties have necessarily been severe, but under the protection of naval vessels and aircraft the Marines have been able to consolidate their positions and the only Japanese left on shore are scattered bands which escaped into the broken and rugged interior. The remaining land operations there are the mopping up operations to dispose of those small units.

* * *

IN ESTABLISHING THEMSELVES in the Solomons the American forces have gained control of an important outpost which in Japanese hands menaced the supply between the United States and Australia and thus tended to cripple Allied operations in all of that great area. In Allied hands it protects our sea lanes and will serve as a base from which to move against other Japanese positions. So important is this to both Japan and the United States that the Japanese are not to be expected to relinquish their outing base without a struggle. For the time being land operations on the Solomons are practically over, but Japan must recapture the islands or accept a signal and perhaps decisive defeat. Hence, though her naval operations to get re-inforcements to the Solomons have resulted in defeat, with heavy loss, the Japanese may be expected to renew their effort, and that area is likely to be the scene of sharp naval conflict for some time.

* * *

MOST EXCITING OF THE WEEK’S war news, however, have been the accounts of the raid from Britain on German positions on the coast of occupied France. Attempting nothing of the character of real invasion, and without intent to hold any of the ground temporarily occupied, the raid was the largest of its kind yet undertaken in the war. The largest ground force yet used in such a raid was landed on beaches near Dieppe, protected by surface craft and an immense flight of planes. The city of Dieppe was left practically in ruins. Gun placements and an important radio station were destroyed. Important information was gained concerning the character and distribution of German defense, and it is estimated that one-third of Germany’s western air force was destroyed or put out of commission. The expedition then returned to its English base, arriving on schedule time.

* * *

NAZI PROPAGANDA HAS REPRESENTED this raid as a futile attempt at real invasion. There was no need of the British disclaimer to explode this theory. When the Allies undertake actually to invade the continent and to hold ground at first occupied it will be with land, sea and air forces many times the size of those used in the Dieppe raid. But this raid may be considered the forerunner, perhaps of many others of similar or greater scope, and of a real invasion which will tax Hitler’s strength to the utmost.

* * *

THE BAYONNE CABLE FACTORY which was taken over by the navy has been returned to the company. Workmen in the plant refused to accept the order of the labor board and quit work, whereupon the president ordered the navy to take over the plant. The workmen have since agreed to continue work whether the plant was operated by the government or by its owners. No explanation is offered as to the change of heart on the part of the strikers. It may be that public sentiment has something to do with it. Seldom have there been such general expressions of anger and disgust as those which have been made all over the country concerning this incident. And the denunciation has not been confined to the strikers. It has included specifically the whose course of the administration in respect to controversies involving labor. In such cases the administration has gone out of its way to carry favor with agitators who profess falsely to represent the labor of the United States.

* * *

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT’S PRESIDENCE has suffered as a result of proceedings in the Democrat state convention in New York. In this case Mr. Roosevelt seems deliberately to have looked for trouble, and without question he found it. Needlessly he committed himself to the candidacy of Senator Mead for the party’s nomination for governor. Attorney General Bennett, supported by James A. Farley, was nominated on the convention’s first ballot. Mr. Roosevelt has been criticized severely for dipping into the New York gubernatorial campaign at a time when with the nation at war and with his insistence on running the whole show himself, he has already more jobs than any one man can perform well.
ONE OF THE PURPOSES OF THE Allied raid on Dieppe was to feel out the enemy's defenses and discover as much as possible of their strength and arrangement. That reminds me of the small boy who poked his finger into a hornets' nest to stir the hornets and find out how many there were. In war it is necessary to do just about that sort of thing. It is dangerous business, and those who undertake it are fully aware of its danger. Danger, after all, is a relative thing, and the attitude of a man toward a particular kind of danger is governed a good deal by his experience. Most of us, for instance, look upon flying in combat as anything but safe, but in recounting his own experience in the Dieppe raid one of the fliers said that when he looked down on the desperate ground fighting beneath him he said "None of that for me!" It struck him as being altogether too dangerous.

** **

IT IS A FACT THAT ONE IS INCLINED to belittle the hazards of the task in which he is engaged and with which he is familiar and to exalt those to which some other person is subjected. I recall the story, which I have told before, of the rodeo cowboy at the fairground a good many years ago. In addition to the rodeo proper there were to be motorcycle races. A cowboy in chaps and 10-gallon hat stood at the far side of the race track watching the cyclists warm up. Several machines came around the turn together and got tangled up and there was a general spill in which, fortunately, no one was much hurt. When the excitement was over the cowboy started for the stable, remarking, as he shook his head: "They can put me on a hawse anytime!" He felt safe on a bucking bronco, but a motorcycle was altogether too dangerous for him.

** **

THIS ATTITUDE TOWARD DANGER is exhibited by most circus performers. Most circus acts impress the average onlooker as fairly dangerous, but each performer looks on his particular stunt as quite safe, but thinks that all the other performers are taking terrible chances. Thus the man who does that sort of thing will turn a triple somersault over a herd of elephants without turning a hair. He feels that it's quite ordinary and all in the day's work. But he shudders at the dangerous tricks that the trapeze artist performs. And the man on the trapeze, who flies through the air with the greatest of ease, is sure that the fellow who does the tight wire act will break his neck one of these days.

THEN THERE IS THE STORY, now some months old, of the chap in London who was digging up a delayed action bomb which might explode at any second. Suddenly he shouted from the bottom of the hole to the men on the surface "Pull me up! Pull me up!" They pulled him up hurriedly and when he reached the surface he pointed downward with horror, saying "Look at that damned rat down there."

** **

SOME DAYS AGO THE HERALD had an item about a freak potato plant grown on the Minnesota side which produced tubers, not only underground, but on the stalk. Tom Harig, who has a big garden at his home on Thirteenth avenue South, pulled up a potato plant which had been performing in a similar manner. All along the stalk were potatoes, growing from the stalk much as tomatoes do.

** **

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE TOMATO and the potato are botanically of the same family and these freak potatoes had adopted some of the habits of their cousin, the tomato. I have read somewhere of potato and tomato plants being successfully grafted, one onto the other.

** **

MOST OF OUR DOMESTIC PLANTS have been developed from wild stock and in their present form they live in artificial conditions. Many of them have a tendency to revert to the original and in the effort many oddities are produced. Thus, potatoes will form growths in all sorts of curious ways. Corn, which, as we know it, is expected to produce seed on cobs encased in husks, will sometimes develop seed on the tassels, where it does not belong. The onion is supposed to produce seed at the top of a seed stalk, but sometimes one finds little onions growing at the top of the stalk and this habit has been cultivated until it has become fixed in some varieties. Many others of our familiar plants are given to similar eccentricities. In their subconsciousness they seem to hear and try to respond to the call of the wild and they become all mixed up in the process.
J. MILO WALKER, A RESIDENT AT the Home for the Aged, though 95 years old maintains interest in what is going on in the world. He is particularly interested in the fate of Hitler and in devising some method of punishing him which will be commensurate with his evil deeds. After thinking the subject over Mr. Walker has concluded that the best way of dealing with the Nazi chief would be to confine him in a solitary chamber and turn about 100 hives of bees loose on him. That would be an interesting way of disposing of the man, but I understand that just at this moment Hitler is still at large. The immediate task is to dispose of his armed forces, a job that will take some doing.

* * *

ONE OF THE GARDEN FREAKS OF this season is a pair of twin cucumbers grown in the garden of Professor W. H. Moran at 528 Hamline street. Science tells us of identical twins in the human race, and such specimens appear to be produced in the vegetable kingdom. Those cucumber twins are identical in size, shape and color.

* * *

YEARS AGO PEOPLE SANG OF CAPTAIN JINKS of the Horse Marines, who fed his horse good corn and beans, and many sang the song without realizing that there were no Horse Marines, the marines being what might be called an army department of the navy. But Captain Jinks would find himself quite at home today on the east coast, for there the coast guard has set up a mounted service to comb the beaches for saboteurs. Do the captains in that service "teach young ladies how to dance," as Captain Jinks did?

* * *

PROSPECTS OF FUEL SHORTAGE have brought visions of epidemics of all sorts of diseases to eastern cities. Without question adequate steps must be taken to make fuel accessible to the inhabitants of the eastern cities and every part of the country. But that wholesale epidemics will follow inadequate heating is not so certain.

* * *

WHEN BOMBS BEGAN TO FALL over Britain and the people were driven into basements and all sorts of improvised shelters there were doleful predictions that the country would be swept by dis-ease and that the public health would be permanently impaired. Nothing of the kind happened. There was disease, in some cases more acute than usual, but medical authorities say that the general health of the people was and has continued to be better than usual.

* * *

IT IS POSSIBLE, OF COURSE, THAT there has been general impairment of health in some groups, those with the higher incomes and more comfortable ways of living, and that the improvement which makes up the better average is in the low-income groups. Many thousands of those have enjoyed better living conditions than those to which they were accustomed, and their health, formerly neglected, has been looked after by government agencies. On the whole, therefore, neither cold and uncomfortable houses nor bombing should be relied on as means for improvement of public health.

* * *

"I D BE PERFECTLY WILLING TO give my car to the government," says a Grand Forks housewife, "if I didn't expect it would be turned over to some politician's wife to gad about in."

* * *

THERE IS UNDER CONSIDERATION the creation of an official war correspondents' corps to serve in connection with the armed forces of the United States. According to the suggested plan the men in that corps would be the only correspondents permitted with the armed forces during engagements of any kind, and they would supply all the news that comes from the front. It is believed by advocates of the plan that with such a service information concerning military operations would get to the public more promptly and in more satisfactory form than under the present arrangement in which the independent correspondent experiences many complications and much delay in getting his material censored and passed on for distribution.

* * *

Germans, Italians and Russians have their official correspondents' corps, and with them private correspondents are not allowed at the front. It is understood that Japan operates under a somewhat similar scheme. Private correspondents have always accompanied the British forces, as they have accompanied those of the United States since the days of Washington. There may be merit in the proposed change, but if it would result in the broadcasting of such fantastic fabrications as comes from German and Italian and Japanese official sources, let's forget it and stick to the system that we have.
WHEN AN INTELLIGENT BOY who has always had the use of his eyes finds his sight failing and then becomes totally blind, what are his sensations, and how does he adjust himself to the darkened world into which he has been ushered? Out of his own experience, Karsten Ohnstad answered those questions insofar as they relate to his own case. His story is one of intense interest, and it should bring comfort and inspiration to others who, because of a physical handicap, have felt that the door of opportunity was closed to them.

* * *

KARSTEN OHNSTAD WAS A northern Minnesota boy when his sight began to fail as a result of a minor injury in a ball game. When he found that letters "began to swim on the pages like jellyfish in stagnant water," and he began to see the world "through a luminous fog," he consulted a Grand Forks specialist, but was unable to obtain relief. Other specialists were consulted, but no help could be obtained. After thorough examination and long treatment a St. Paul specialist placed in the boy's hand a card containing the Braille alphabet and asked him to study it. The youth was doomed to a life of blindness.

* * *

TODAY, AT THE AGE OF 29, KARSTEN OHNSTAD is a college graduate, a trained writer with several years experience in earning his own living, and the author of a book just published by the Bobbs-Merrill company, "The World at My Finger Tips." The book, an autobiography, a condensation of which is published in Readers' Digest, is the thrilling story of a young man's struggle to find his way about in a new world. It is more than that. It is a story of unflinching courage and dogged determination which would not acknowledge defeat.

* * * 

MOST OF US WHO CAN SEE have wondered at the ability of the blind to move about as freely as most of them do, sensing the presence of obstacles and avoiding them apparently as well as others can do. Ohnstad tells how this ability came to him. His first realization of its possibility came when he was able to recognize the presence of a clothes pole in the family yard when he was two or three feet from it. That discovery, he writes, was to him a Rosetta stone. It opened the way to interpretation of hidden mysteries. Scientists have learned that the blind are able to sense the rebound, or echo, of sound waves from near-by objects, such echoes being indistinguishable to others.

* * *

OHNSTAD'S ACCOUNT OF THE physical factors which entered into his readjustment is one of the interesting features of his book. He learned to walk securely, to run and to play, much as other boys do. His study of Braille enabled him to do clerical and stenographic work, but even more interesting is his description of his mental attitude, which rejected all thought of inferiority and sought acceptance on the same basis with other human beings.

* * *

PERSISTENTLY HE SOUGHT TO take his place with others on their own ground. Accepted into a fraternity, he was disappointed when he was told that for him the customary initiatory ceremonies would be modified, and he was not happy until he had been "given the works" just as other boys were. In every way he sought to make his blindness inconspicuous, and, very largely, he succeeded.

* * *

NOT ALL ARE ABLE TO OVERCOME the handicap of blindness—and it is a real handicap—as this young man has done. For this to be possible requires elements of character which not all possess. Ohnstad's experience is not unique. Others of the blind, very many of them, have magnificently overcome their physical handicap and achieved conspicuous success in life. Every case of this kind is encouraging and stimulating. Ohnstad's story, told simply and sincerely, is a fine contribution to the literature of real success. It should help many a blind youth, many a one whose way seems to be barred by some other obstacle, to face life bravely, determinedly and confidently.
I SUPPOSE THAT EVER SINCE conscious intelligence first dawned on the human mind human beings have played with the idea of flying. Darius Green was an imaginary character, but he was a faithful representative of a vast army, especially of boys, and when he said “Birds can fly, so why can’t I?” he stated a problem as old and as familiar as boys themselves. And when the psalmist wrote “Oh, that I had wings like a dove!” he expressed a longing that every boy has experienced as he watched the effortless soaring of the birds.

** BOYS, AND MANY OLDER PERSONS, have experimented for many centuries with the two types of flying devices with which we have become most familiar in recent years. The kite represents the modern plane in that it remains aloft because of the force of a current of air applied to an inclined surface. Those little windmill-like toys that are made to ascend vertically by spinning them rapidly represent the helicopter, which has been less completely developed, but which has possibilities which the ordinary plane does not possess. While the helicopter is a long way from its maximum efficiency, it can rise and alight vertically, and as may be desired, may be flown forward or backward or kept stationary in the air.

** ** **

*IN AN ARTICLE IN THE CURRENT* Atlantic Dr. Igor Sikorsky, well known air authority and enthusiast, describes what he believes will be the development of the helicopter within the next few years. As a basis for his predictions he outlines something of what has already been done toward the development of this air craft. To dramatize the subject he gives the following preview:

* ** **

“ONCE AGAIN LET US PEER BRIEFLY at 1955 and see how your wife handles a typical family helicopter as she flies 50 miles to spend an hour with a friend. She opens the doors of the helicopter hangar that is only slightly larger and higher than your old two-car garage. She pushes the starter, the motor purrs. Seated in the two-place cabin, she presses a clutch that applies the engine power to the wheel. For this is a roadable model; she does not have to push or pull it to the lawn. The helicopter drives itself out of its garage to a suitable space near your badminton court. Here she disengages the wheel-clutch and applies the power to the overhead rotor blades. Your wife is now ready to ascend. How does she accomplish this?

* ** **

“TO EXPLAIN, LET ME DESCRIBE” the controls. Directly before her is a knobbed control stick, reminiscent of the gearshift on the earlier automobiles. On her left is another lever like the familiar emergency brake. Comfortable to her feet are two pedals resembling the clutch and brake of a car. There is a throttle quadrant near her hand, and among the instruments on the panel before her is a tachometer to count the number of revolutions a minute made by the rotor blades.

* ** *

“NOW SHE OPENS THE THROTTLE.” The engine, well muffled, picks up speed until the tachometer tells her the rotor blades are whirring 240 revolutions a minute—or the equivalent of 275 miles an hour at the tip of the blade. The rotors must whirl at this rate before she applies the lift.

* ** *

“NOW HER HAND PULLS GENTLY on the lefthand lift lever as if she were applying an emergency stop on a car. Slowly, in this instance, her pull changes the pitch of the rotor blades so that they bite more deeply, more powerfully into the air. The machine becomes light, quivers with eagerness to be off.

* ** *

“ANOTHER FRACTION OF AN INCH pull on the lift lever and gently, smoothly, the helicopter begins to ascend straight up. She controls the rate of rise by increasing or lessening the rotor blade pitch by the lift lever. She permits the machine to ascend to 1200 feet. Now she pushes the center control stick forward. She is tilting the rotor blades—and the machine, too, slightly—so that they bite the air in a forward motion. The helicopter gets under way. From now on, all the helicopter’s movements save rise and descent are controlled by the center stick. If she wishes to go forward more swiftly, she pushes the stick away from her. If she wishes to stop and hover, she leaves it in exactly the same position. She uses an automatic gearshift. If she wants to back up, she pulls it toward her; and she presses it right or left if she wishes to make a turn in those directions—or to go sideways with no forward movement.

* ** **

“NOW SHE MAKES A LAST ADJustment on the lift lever—a helicopter has a slight tendency to rise as it attains forward speed and she must adjust the rotor pitch to it. She turns the machine to the left to print upon the marked air route to her friend’s house. She is cruising comfortably at 120 miles an hour. In 30 minutes she sights her friend’s house. Firmly she pulls back on the control stick, which slows down the helicopter to a stop 1200 above green lawn. She hovers, prepares to descend.

* ** **

“How does she do this? She sits with her right hand lightly on the control stick, her left gripping the lift lever. With the control stick she holds to the left to print an only lightly breeze, pressing forward, back, right or left as the case may be—just as she would jockey a motorcar into a parking space.

Gradually she releases the lift lever. As the rotor blades bite less powerfully at the air, the helicopter sinks gently to earth. She can control the descent to one foot at a time. The machine touches the ground, the shock absorbers lower the cabin without a jar. She turns off the ignition switch and climbs briskly out.”

* ** **
JUST NOW I FIND MYSELF IN A tight spot. They're putting on a drive for scrap to help out with the war. I'm all for it, but I can't contribute. All the old rubber about the place was turned in when they had the other drive and all the old pails and bits of metal were sent out to the junk yard before there was any demand for it. The only thing that I have left in the nature of scrap is a big box of flattened tin cans, and nobody wants them. Nevertheless, I shall keep on saving cans, flattening them and storing them away.

Then, some day, when they're stuck for metal with which to finish a tank or a battleship, those cans of mine will come in handy. Of course I'm not looking for any recognition, but it's just possible that they may make me an admiral or a major general for my thoughtfulness.

* * *

I SEE THAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE just reported killing 45,000 more Germans in a battle northwest of Moscow. Every little while, when I read the reports from Moscow or Berlin of the latest slaughter, I think that that must finish it. For more than a year now Moscow has been reporting the killing of Germans in batches of 100,000 or so, and Berlin had told every little while of the annihilation of the whole Russian army so it is clear that there can't be any fighting men left over there except a few odd lots around the edges that have been overlooked. Still the thing doesn't end, for, mysteriously more Germans come to the front to be killed and more Russian armies present themselves to be annihilated. Either there are more men then anyone knew about or somebody has been doing a lot of lying.

* * *

WHILE THE NUMBER OF MEN killed in engagements on the Russian front seems to have been grossly exaggerated by both sides for propaganda purposes, no proper estimate of the facts can be made by comparing the casualties of this war with those of other great conflicts, for the number of men engaged in a great battle now is many times the number engaged in any of the notable battles of history. At the decisive battle of Gettysburg Lee is credited with about 70,000 men and Meade with 82,000. Today an engagement employing those numbers would scarcely be considered more than a skirmish. In that battle Lee lost 30,000 in killed and wounded and Meade 23,000. In each case the number of wounded was several times the number of killed. In the battle of Waterloo the forces actu-
A READING OF THAT BOOK BY Margaret Leech, "Revelle in Washington," published a year or so ago, suggests some interesting comparisons between the conditions at the seat of government in the early years of the Civil War and those prevailing now. The story told in that book is a recital of facts assembled for official records, from personal testimony, and from articles published from day to day in Washington newspapers while the occurrences described were matters of current news.

WASHINGTON DURING THE FIRST half of the Civil War was the theater of operations of a government of divided counsels trying to organize for a war while surrounded by incompetence, selfishness, greed and positive disloyalty. Members of the government were jealous and suspicious of each other, and some of them, at least, looked on Lincoln with contempt as a country lawyer whom a political accident has projected into a position which he was not competent to fill.

THE CITY WAS FILLED TO OVERFLOWING with people looking for favors, business or political. Contractors besieged the departments with plans for war contracts which would yield them huge profits. Incompetents from all over the country swarmed into Washington looking for soft jobs at big pay and members of congress used their influence to obtain such positions for constituents to whom they owed political debts. Bribes were offered and taken, and scandalous frauds were perpetrated in supplying the government with war material.

WHILE SUCH CONFUSION PREVAIL in everything pertaining to the civil operations of the government, operation of the armed forces was hampered by equal confusion in military and naval commands. Officers seeking promotion which they had not earned were jealous of each other and sometimes were more active in attempting to discredit each other than in faithful performance of the duties to which they were assigned.

ACTUALLY, WASHINGTON WAS A hotbed of secession sentiment. The fifth columnist of today find it necessary to maintain at least some appearance of secrecy, but in the early sixties disloyalty in Washington was open and rampant. And even late in the war defeatism and hopelessness was so prevalent that it was possible for such men as Horace Greeley to counsel a negotiated peace with the South on the basis of "letting the erring sisters go."

THAT PICTURE, TRUTHFUL IN ALL its details, is anything but inspiring, and one may well wonder that out of so much confusion and corruption there could have come the victory that was sealed at Appomattox. But the fact that victory was won should not reconcile us to a repetition of the blunders and crimes of three quarters of a century ago. The evils that were rampant in the first half of the Civil war were associated with the effort of a peaceful people to adjust themselves to the tragic requirements of war. Always that effort has been characterized by blundering and inefficiency, and its unfamiliarity has provided opportunity for the grafters and racketeers.

WE ARE HAVING IN WASHINGTON today a repetition of some of the undesirable conditions of 1861 and 1862. With due allowance for the environment of the period, those conditions, or something similar to them, have characterized the onset of every major war in which Great Britain has engaged. They marked the onset of our Revolutionary war and of our war with Spain. They were present at the beginning of the former World war, and they are with us again today. They represent democracy attempting to adjust itself to an undemocratic way of life.

THERE IS IN WASHINGTON NOW much to condemn, much that needs to be corrected, much that, if uncorrected, may cause us to lose this war. But there is sound basis for hope in the fact that in spite of restrictions and repressions, watchful eyes are keen to detect evil and voices that will not be silenced are telling the truth to the people. Existing wrongs are being brought to public attention and public demand for correction is having its effect. Furthermore, the picture is by no means all black. There are patriotic men in the government and its agency whose single thought is for the public welfare. There are men, thousands of them, conspicuous in every industry, who are devoting themselves wholeheartedly and selflessly to the winning of the war, and there is a vast body of millions of Americans who need only know how best they can serve to devote themselves to that service with all their might.