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MODESTY IS AN EXCELLENT trait, but, like many other good things, it may be overdone. There are those who rush into the papers without reason or provocation, merely for the pleasure of seeing their names in print. But these are others who really have something to say who detract from the force of their observations by asking that their names be withheld. The story of a personal experience usually gains interest if the reader knows who is telling the story, or about whom it is being told. Thus, the story of a hitch-hiking trip to Reno, Nevada, which is outlined below, would have been more interesting to many readers if they knew the identity of the person who made the trip. However, I make a special request that his name be withheld, and I must respect his wish.

I MUST REFER TO THE MAN in which this story has been prepared. The account is written somewhat in diary form on loose-leaf letter size paper, and comes in a binder of a suitable size. A well-drawn map of the route covered occupies one page, and there are several photographic illustrations of scenes, particularly toward the end of the journey. Such a record will be invaluable years hence, both for the memories which it will bring to the writer and as an heirloom for members of his family. Most of us lose a great deal of the value which might be derived from journeys, long or short, by neglecting to make a record of scenes and occurrences by the way.

IN LOOKING OVER THIS RECORD I find in it nothing sensational, nothing especially unusual. It is simply a day-by-day record of the experiences and impressions of the traveler, but I have found it intensely interesting. Here is the writer’s introduction:

PREVIOUS TO MAKING THIS trip I can only remember being in two states of the Union. These two states were North Dakota and Minnesota. (I did travel east on a trip which took me across the ocean when I was a very small child, but it brings me no recollections.) Now I have been in eight states, including North Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, California and Nevada. My journey, from Grand Forks to Reno, was made by hitch-hiking. The cost was nearly nineteen dollars.

THE HIKER STARTED FROM Grand Forks on June 7, 1933, about 6 A. M., and that day he got as far as Bismarck, going by way of Minot. Not a bad start! The next day was a relay affair, one part of which was in the car of a Baptist missionary who imparted much of the lore of the western plains to his guest. An item about rattlesnakes is interesting. The missionary told his friend that in the early days out west the settlers made a practice of driving their hogs before them when they were traveling, as the hogs would eat the rattlesnakes which infested the country.

THE RIDE FROM DICKINSON to Beach is described as one of the most interesting on the entire trip because of the unusual natural features and the stories told of early day experiences there. The Bad Lands section was found impressive, with its variety of form and wealth of color, and the remains of the establishment of Marquis de Mores prompted the following paragraph:

THE MARQUIS HAD planned to do a big business in meat-packing by having the cattle killed where they had lived and then shipping the cured and canned meat east. But the marquis could not have been a good business man, for he soon lost all that he had invested. The ranchers sold cattle to him in the day time and drove the same cattle away at night, only to sell them back once more the next day.

THE WRITER HAD BEEN told that eastern Montana is dry and drab looking, but his trip was made in the early summer, not long after the snow had melted, and the land was green, with vast herds of cattle and wild horses with flowing manes visible from the highway. “An eastern cow,” says the diary, “if put in the Montana hills and left there in winter, would starve to death because it does not know the technic of a western cow, which paws through the snow to get at the dried grass.”

BEFORE LEAVING GRAND Forks the traveler had provided himself with a pup tent, in which he had expected to sleep. He tried it on the first night in Montana, but awoke in the early morning almost frozen. Thereafter he slept in tourist camps and used the tent for a blanket.

THIS WILL BE ENOUGH of the hitch-hiking diary for today. Further selections will be made later on.
EVERYONE SEEMED TO ENJOY the screen play "Little Women." Those who read the book fifty years ago, and have reread it at intervals since, seemed to find in it the true flavor of the original, and those whose reading of it has been more recent, or who, perhaps, have never read it at all, responded to the pathos and humor which Miss Alcott wove into her great human document. Incidentally, it is a play without a villain, a gangster, a prostitute or a triangle. Yet, like its original, even in this sophisticated age the play is a best seller. Perhaps, after all, we are not quite as tough as we think we are.

MY FAVORITE OF THE ALcott stories is "Little Men." The critics, I believe, do not accord it equal standing with "Little Wom-en," and it has not been as generally read. But "Little Men" was given me when I was a small boy, and I read it forward, and backward and sideways before I got a chance at the other. For that reason it occupies a special place in my memory and my affections.

ALF EASTGATE OF LARI-
more writes:
"My friend David Tuft asked me to write you for the solution to the following problem:
"Two teams start to cut a field of grain, each with a binder of the same width. Will each cut the same amount, or will the head team have a little more than the second?"

THIS MAY BE A PLOT TO get me tangled up in a mathematical maze. However, if there is a catch in it I shall be glad to learn where it is, so that I may spring it on somebody else.

I should say that if the machines make the same number of rounds each the first will cut more grain than the second. It seems a little clearer if one imagines the ma-chines making their rounds separately instead of one trailing the other. Let No. 1 make its round. It has sliced off a strip, say 7 feet wide, all around the field, and has reduced the distance by that much. No. 2 makes its round, covering the shorter distance. That ends round No. 1. Calculate each round in the same way. At the end of the 20th round, for instance, No. 1 will have traveled considerably farther than No. 2.

I NEVER THOUGHT OF THE subject in that connection before, but the shortening of the distance for the last machine must have made quite a difference in bonanza farming days when 30 or 40 binders worked together on the same field. With 41 7-foot binders working in a string on a section of wheat the first machine would make four miles on the first round, and the last 2,240 feet less. There would be the same difference of nearly half a mile on each round, which would count mightily on a team in a day's work. I never worked with one of those big outfits, and don't know what the practice was. Perhaps they alternated the teams, placing each of the faster teams in the lead during certain periods.

WHILE MESSAGES ARE BEING received from Byrd, away down south, and the public is interested in the struggle which the explorer and his crew are making to land their supplies and get them across the treacherous ice before the southern freezes their ship in, it is interesting to recall that 25 years ago no human being had ever reached either pole. Peary was then making preparations for the final dash which was to take him to the north pole. Captain Bob Bartlett, whose voice has been heard over the radio recently, was with him. Food and other supplies were being pushed north and stored in stations which were established so that the final journey might be shortened as much as possible. It was not until April 6, 1909, that the pole was finally reached.

EXPLORATION BOTH NORTH and south has been marked by tragedy. Amundson, one of the most resourceful of polar explorers, had planned an expedition to the north pole, but his plans were thrown awry by Peary's success. Quickly he changed his program and set out for the south pole, which he reached from his camp situated near where Byrd established Little America. Scott arrived at the same point a month later, and he and his companions died of cold and starvation on their return trip.
E. J. TAYLOR, OF BISMARCK, who has been trying to learn the whereabouts of the few surviving members of the North Dakota constitutional convention, has heard from Richard Bennett, who was one of the representatives of Grand Forks county in that convention. Mr. Bennett is living in Great Falls, Mont., where he has practiced law for many years. He celebrated his 84th birthday on the 4th of last December, and he writes that in spite of his years he is sound and in good physical condition, with the exception of partial deafness.

MR. BENNETT WRITES THAT he arrived in Grand Forks April 15, 1878, and left because of ill health in 1891. He was greatly interested in the embryo state and its possibilities, and left it with regret. He has not kept in touch with other members of the convention, but he writes of them as men of high type. During the convention, he writes, there were some lively debates and hot flashes, but on the whole harmony prevailed, and when the work was done not a whisper of disloyalty to the state was heard.

I HAVE A NOTE FROM J. A. McIntosh, of Cavalier, enclosing a clipping from a Canadian paper telling of the decision of the family of Sir Henry Dickens to publish the "Life of Our Lord," which Charles Dickens wrote for his children, and which, in accordance with the wish of the author, has remained unpublished until this time. Reference to the fact was made in this column recently. The Canadian clipping says that an offer of $5,000 is said to have been made for the book. Sir Henry Dickens died last December as the result of a street accident in London.

MR. M’INTOSH SEEMS TO have been a neighbor of mine in the old days in Canada, although we never met, and for several years after I had left that part of the country he lived near Cayuga, some miles down the river from Brantford, my home town. He refers to the "Old Indian Line" road, over which he drove many times with horse and buggy between Cayuga and Brantford, and wonders if that road is still in use and when and why it was built. I was not familiar with that road, as it was some miles on the opposite side of the river from my home, but I assume that it was built in the early days as a means of transportation between the reservation and the city. In my time the Indians from the reservation usually went to town by the road on the right bank of the river, but that road was probably built later, as it passed through some difficult country.

LAST SUMMER I FOUND THAT the river road with which I had been familiar had been abandoned, as the river had carried it away in spots, and instead a road has been cut through our little farm, following the crest of the hill.

THE PLAY "LITTLE WOMEN," thoroughly admirable and enjoyable, presents one feature, a very common one, which never appeals to me, namely, the exaggerated close-up. It is generally understood that grease paint is used by actors, that smears of various kinds are used around the eyes, and that glycerine is used to stimulate tears. The purpose of these devices is to give an appearance of naturalness to something which would lack it otherwise. Now, having achieved that illusion, why should they destroy it by enlarging the figures and exposing all the details? When I see one of these close-ups so very close I am reminded of looking at my thumb through a powerful magnifying glass, a process in which all sense of proportion is lost, and which impresses me as, if not positively indecent, just a little bit off-color.

THE Y. M. C. A. CHECKER club submits the following problems:
Black—8, 10, 13, 26, kings 29, 30, 25, 21.
White—27, 23, 19, 18, 15, 16.
White to play and win.
STEPHEN C. FOSTER, WHO died seventy years ago, closed his brief life, a broken and dissipated man. He had achieved unusual success, for during his own lifetime the songs which he had written were sung around the world. But, like many others of brilliant parts, he was unable to control himself, and the man who might have continued to win laurels for himself, and to enjoy for years the evidence of his power to touch human hearts and stir human emotions closed his eyes in a New York hospital, the victim of his own weakness and irresolution, with no friend near to know of his passing or care concerning his fate.

FOSTER WAS PRIMARILY A writer of music rather than of words, but in his later work he combined both functions, and we are indebted to him for both words and music of some of the best known and best loved of American songs. Before his time there were no American popular songs worthy of the name. Such as there were had usually the flavor of the barroom. Foster, a native of Pittsburgh, and who made only occasional visits south, found in the negro melodies of the plantations strains which he was able to weave into imperishable form. In the life of the plantation he found touches of gayety, sadness and longing which he interpreted in simple words which quickly took the place of the bizarre songs which they succeeded. And in some mysterious way he touched a chord which thrilled north and south alike, for his songs speak a language which knows neither section nor color, but is universal.

FOSTER’S BEST KNOWN AND best loved song is “Swanee River.” Following it closely in popularity are “My Old Kentucky Home,” and “Old Black Joe.” He wrote scores of songs, grave and gay. Of the latter group “O Susanna!” is doubtless best known. “Swanee River” was credited for several years to E. P. Christy, the famous minstrel man. Foster sold him the song and permitted it to be published under Christy’s name. In later years the authorship of the song became the subject of litigation.

THE GROUNDHOG SAW HIS shadow on Friday, and then for some time he didn’t see it. That must mean that during the next six weeks we are going to have a mixture of mild and severe weather, and in that respect the next few weeks will resemble closely similar periods in most of the other years that I have known. Who says that the groundhog is not an infallible prophet?

GORDON SINCLAIR, WHO struck an unusual note in his “Foot-Loose in India,” last year, is out with another book, “Cannibal Quest,” the material for which was gathered in Siam and the nearby archipelago. I haven’t seen the book, but a review indicates that, like its predecessor, it presents the author’s impressions of distant and unfamiliar parts of the world in a breezy, sometimes slangy, but decidedly interesting manner. Sinclair is a member of the staff of the Toronto Star. He goes abroad, as the bear went over the mountain, to see what he can see, and to write about it. He does not attempt to write history, philosophy or sociology, but between his lines one can find a good deal of all three.

IN A BIT OF MUSICAL GOSsip in an eastern paper Julia Ward Howe is credited with writing “John Brown’s Body.” Mrs. Howe became famous as the author of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” which is sung to the tune of “John Brown’s Body.” In some of the old publications the tune is described as an old plantation melody. I have not been able to learn whether Mrs. Howe’s inspiring song popularized the music and led later to the adaptation of doggerel lines to it, or whether the doggerel had first been sung and Mrs. Howe fitted her words to music which had already become popular. “John Brown’s Body” is generally supposed to have been a popular marching song in the union army during the civil war, but I have heard veterans of that war say that they seldom or never heard it until after the war.
MAXWELL ANDERSON'S play, "Mary of Scotland," has been running in New York since November 27 and is still going strong. Before the opening of this play the former North Dakota man had already established himself as a poet and dramatist, but his new play has won for him fresh laurels. The play has passed the stage of critical comment, and it seems now to be taken for granted by dramatic writers as one of the firmly established institutions of the stage. Critics are using it as a base from which to proceed in their evaluation of other stage productions. All of this must be satisfactory to Mr. Anderson, as it is gratifying to his friends.

ONE WRITER REFERS TO "Mary of Scotland" as evidence of the trend away from the extreme realism of the past few years and toward the more imaginative field of the costume drama and the romance of distant historical periods. For one, I am glad that there is such a trend. It shows that the spirit which causes the child to love fairy stories has not been quite stifled by the sordid affairs of everyday life, and that people still love occasionally to wander in the Forest of Arden and yield themselves for a moment to its beauty and glamor.

SOMEONE WHO MUST HAVE been badly at a loss for a job has been rewriting "David Copperfield." The announcement says that the revised version preserves the characters that "ring true," and has given the characters a "livelier and fresher setting." Why in thunder can't the man write a book of his own, and leave Dickens alone?

THE LITERARY DIGEST devotes a column to an explanation of why "ain't" is not good form. Of course no person whom one would wish to know says "ain't," but as between the obnoxious "ain't I?" and "aren't I?" which the Digest properly denounces as a barbarism of the worst kind the odds are in favor of "ain't!" It is at least possible to connect it up with "am not" without doing violence to the grammatical number.

THE DIGEST SAYS THAT "ain't" was used occasionally by writers of English as far back as 1701, and that modern writers have used it. The latter, however, have put the offensive word into the mouths of only their illiterate characters. The magazine goes on to say that this form survives as a provincialism along eastern England, from Yorkshire down to Kent, and in the Midlands and some other sections, but it is used only in the speech of the uneducated.

CURIOUSLY, THE DIGEST makes no mention of another and better form of abbreviation which, to my knowledge, was once current in Yorkshire. One of my esteemed grandfathers was a Yorkshireman who brought to Canada his Yorkshire accent and retained most of it during a long life. And I'm quite sure that Grand-dad never said "ain't." As an abbreviation for "am not?" he said "amn't." Which is good English and good grammar, corresponding in form to other contractions used by our best speakers and writers. Neighbors who come from the same part of England used the same form.

ANOTHER CONTRACTION common among the same people was "will'n't" for "will not." That, again, is a perfectly logical contraction of the original, and, while it is more of a mouthful, from the standpoint of accuracy it is to be preferred to "won't," which is an invention and distortion.

REV. DR. J. G. MOORE, A pioneer himself, has a high regard for many of the men who were conspicuous in the early history of the state, and whose fine qualities were often overshadowed in public estimation by political conflict. He tells a story of Jud LaMoure, the elder, which is new to me, although I have heard of scores of other instances of LaMoure's unostentatious generosity. In one section of Pembina county, where almost a solid vote was cast year after year for LaMoure or the candidates supported by him, Dr. Moore asked a local resident to explain the support given LaMoure. He got a reply something like this:

"IT CAME HERE YEARS AGO and started farming. I needed seed wheat, and I hadn't a dollar with which to buy it. I went to Jud LaMoure, a perfect stranger, and asked him of my need. He told me that at a certain place he had a granary full of wheat. I was to go there, take what I needed, measure it up, keep track of it, and pay him when I could. That's just one case out of hundreds. Do you think it strange that we are all for Jud LaMoure?" And Dr. Moore said he didn't.
THE OTHER DAY THE NEW YORK TIMES, staid and conservative newspaper though it is, published a picture which may be indicative of a popular attitude toward crime and criminals. The foreground of the picture is Dillinger, bandit and kidnapper, with his arm resting on the shoulder of Prosecuting Attorney Estill of Lake county, Indiana, who hoped to send Dillinger to the electric chair for a murder committed in East Chicago. Mr. Estill has his arm around Dillinger. At one side stands Mrs. Lillian Hovey, woman sheriff of the county, apparently a congenial member of the little party. The picture might be one of an affectionate family group rather than that of a desperate criminal and two public officials.

* * *

THE NEW YORK TIMES is not only a great paper in the figurative sense, but it is a big paper physically, publishing many pages daily, with many departments and many employees. It is not strange that occasionally there should be a slip and that something should be published which is not in accord with the policy of the management. Evidently the management has sensed the fact that a slip has been made in the publication of this picture, as evidenced the following comment on the editorial page of the paper the next day:

"TO BE SURE, THERE IS such a thing conceivable as the two Indiana officials looking at Dillinger and saying to themselves, 'There, but for the grace of God, go the Sheriff and the district attorney of Lake county.' Or, on a lower plane, one can imagine the two representatives of Indiana law and order appreciative of what Dillinger has done to give them nation-wide fame. Still, there ought to be a limit somewhere.

"The tabloids have gone much to break down all snobbish barriers between assassins and non-assassins. Day after day public attention is invited to the district attorney of Lake county. And, on a lower plane, one can imagine the two representatives of Indiana law and order appreciative of what Dillinger has done to give them nation-wide fame. Still, there ought to be a limit somewhere.

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DURING HIS LIFETIME H. L. Holmes, of Bathgate, was a frequent visitor in Grand Forks and an active participant in the debates which were carried on by old-timers who met from time to time in the lobby of the Hotel Da-cotah. Many of those discussions took a philosophical turn, and at one of them the subject of reincarnation was debated vigorously and with great positivity. There were those present who held that after death the individual continues his life, perhaps in the same locality, and perhaps in a great changed form. Holmes had no definite convictions on the subject, but said that he would like to believe such a thing possible. He knew in exactly what form he would like to return. It would be, he said, as a sow-thistle. Asked to explain himself he said that there were several people with whom he would like to get even, and if he could return to earth as a sow-thistle he could distribute himself around in such a way that those persons would get what was coming to them. * * *

THERE IS A GOOD DEAL OF interest in watching the birds at a feeding shelf these winter days. Only sparrows patronize ours this weather, and while sparrows have their objectionable qualities, they provide the only bit of wild life visible from the window just now, and they are more than welcome to a few scraps of food a day. They are pugnacious little rascals, and when a dozen or more of them try to crowd onto a shelf about 6 by 10 inches there are royal battles. However, I have noted no serious casualties.

I HAVE SOMETIMES ENTERED myself by trying to count the birds on the shelf and on the ground near by. Twenty or thirty will be present at one time, and as they are all in motion it is quite a trick to count them. I am reminded of a psychological theory advanced by a hypnotist named Santinelli, who made the rounds many years ago, and who made The Herald editorial room a sort of unofficial headquarters. * * *

SANTINELLI INSISTED THAT the human mind is incapable of grasping anything beyond the number three. As he explained it, one can conceive of one as a unit, two as a pair, and three as a definite group, but beyond that the groups must be broken up. Thus, four objects resolve themselves into two pairs, six into two groups of three each, nine into three and three and three, and so on. He was firm in the belief that nobody can count by fours or sixes, three being the limit of capacity. As a try to count the sparrows in a flock I am inclined to think that there may be something in the theory.

THE ISLAND OF NEWFOUNDLAND has recently had its form of government changed. Until recently governed by its own local parliament and administrative officers, the country became hopelessly involved financially and an appeal was sent to Great Britain for help. An agreement was reached under which the local parliament is abolished for the time being and the island assumes the status of a crown colony. Great Britain assumed a part of the indebtedness, and until further notice government will be by a commission made up of an equal number of islanders and representatives of the British government.

THE NEWFOUNDLAND SITUATION is intensely interesting to Rev. Dr. J. G. Moore, who is a native of the island and who spent his youth and early manhood there and as a missionary on the adjoining Labrador mainland. For some time Dr. Moore taught school near his birthplace. Among his pupils was one Johnny Puddister, a sandy-haired, freckled-faced youngster, full of mischief, and bright as a dollar. When the list of new commissioners was announced Dr. Moore recognized as one of them his old pupil, John Puddister.

ALONG THE LABRADOR coast settlements are few and far between. The radio has been a godsend to the inhabitants, for through it they can keep in some sort of contact with the rest of the world. But in the old days little settlements were cut off during the winter from communication of every kind except when long journeys were undertaken with dog sleds. Shortage of food was no uncommon thing, and often provisions had to be severely rationed for long periods. Dr. Moore tells of one meal of which he and three or four others partook where the only food was codfish, and not much of that. Before the food was served an old grizzled veteran at the head of the table said grace as follows: "We pray Thee, Lord, to make us able To eat up all that's on the table. Amen."

Any one of the group could have performed the task without assistance.
IN AN ADVERTISING PAMPHLET found on the porch—with the porch door left open, as usual—there is given a table of ideal weights for men and women of various heights. The table does not go beyond the heights of 6 feet 3 inches for men, and the weight given for that height is 190 pounds. Presumably anything bigger than that is immoral or in some way reprehensible. That reminds me of an old story of Thomas B. Reed, the famous speaker of the house of representatives along in the nineties. Reed was a very large man, as was Grover Cleveland, who was president at the time. A fellow member said to Reed one day: “Mr. Speaker, you must weigh over three hundred.” “No sir,” replied Reed promptly, “no gentleman weighs over three hundred.” The story got to the ears of the president, who is said to have been immensely tickled by it, although he tipped the beam at considerably more than three hundred.

ABOUT LEAVING THE DOOR open when that circular was delivered, I have an elegant way of getting even. I won’t buy a pound of that company’s breakfast food. Maybe that will hold them for a while.

I HAVE JUST BEEN READING an article on the American symphony orchestra, by Winthrop Sargent. It deals in an interesting way with the make-up of the orchestra, the functions of the various sections, and so forth. In a paragraph devoted to the percussion instruments the author tells of the supreme importance of timing with these instruments. The artist at the cymbals, for instance, may have a long wait at the end of which he is to sound only a single note, after which another long rest follows. He must count the beats during every rest and not depend on cues, as an error in a single beat might ruin a whole performance. The players, says the writer, acquire the habit of counting beats even though they may be thinking of something else, a habit which many of them carry into off-stage activities as well as music.

THAT REMINDED ME OF AN incident many years ago during one of the visits of the Minneapolis Symphony orchestra to Grand Forks, when Emil Oberhofer wielded the baton. The concert was in the auditorium, the orchestra occupying raised seats on the stage. I had a seat in the balcony, where I had a perfect view of the stage. Away up near the top was the percussion man with his drums, cymbals and other traps, including a triangle. He was an immense man, tall, broad-shouldered, and as portly as either Speaker Reed or Grover Cleveland. During a long passage he rested, and in his attitude there was utter weariness and complete relaxation.

PRESENTLY HE SHOWED signs of life. He sat erect in his chair and flexed his enormous muscles. “Now,” I thought, “we are going to have action.” He reached down and from the floor picked up the little poker with which they hit the triangle. He braced himself for the assault. I sat tense and expectant. He hit the triangle one gentle tap, and it gave forth a modest “ping.” He laid down his weapon, and settled back in his chair, relaxed, and exhausted by his tremendous effort. The mountain had labored and brought forth just one “ping.”

WE HAVE DISCUSSIONS OF what’s the matter with the schools, and the church, and the newspapers, and the government, and society, and everything. The other night if I had been asked what I thought was the matter with the radio my vocabulary wouldn’t have been equal to the task of telling it. I had been listening to an address on an inspiring subject, delivered in faultless English and in perfect manner. The speaker had painted a picture that lived and breathed. I was thrilled down to my toes. I wanted that thrill to last for a little while. But as the speaker closed another voice invited all and sundry to buy whatever doohad it was that the sponsors of the program were advertising. It was like hanging an advertising sign around the neck of a Madonna.
WHILE CHARLES DICKENS remains one of the world’s most popular authors, there are many persons who do considerable reading who have never read one of his books. There are also those who have started to read Dickens and have found it difficult to become interested in him. That is not at all strange. Styles change in literature as in many other things, and those who have been accustomed only to the books of this generation will find something unfamiliar in Dickens, in form as well as in subject matter. That is true not only of Dickens, but of Scott, Fielding, and the other great novelists of past generations. Sometimes a little persistence is needed to acquire a taste for the old masters, but that little persistence is rewarded by an immense amount of satisfaction.

I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT IT was with excellent intentions that there was broadcast on Wednesday evening a Dickens “pageant,” in honor of the 122nd anniversary of the author’s birth, but I doubt greatly the popular appeal of the presentation. The program consisted chiefly of the dramatization of little bits from each of several of the Dickens novels. There were thus presented the death of Bill Sikes, a scene with Scrooge and his nephew, another featuring Quilp, and Mr. Pickwick’s interview with Mrs. Bardell’s lawyers.

THE ENTIRE PROGRAM lasted only half an hour, and if several dramatic sketches are to be packed into that time, they must be mere fragments. I imagine that whatever pleasure the old reader of Dickens would find in that program would be derived from his recognition of familiar people, incidents and lines rather than from any particular value in the dramatization itself. And I can’t imagine the program having any appeal whatever to the person who has not yet become acquainted with Dickens. I can imagine such a listener saying “Dickens may be all right, but he doesn’t seem so hot to me.”

WHAT I THOUGHT WAS A rather clever touch in the program came in the last few minutes in which several of the Dickens characters responded to an invitation to express their opinion of their creator. Scrooge felt deeply indebted to Dickens for giving him a new outlook on life, but he wished some of the earlier parts of the story might have been toned down a little, Quilp was abusive and defiant, Mr. Pickwick affable and urbane, and Sam Weller characteristically droll, while Tiny Tim wound up the program appropriately with “God bless us every one.”

MY FRIEND ROWLAND OF the U. N. D. music department, has lent me a copy of the Foster Hall Bulletin, which is published by a society established in honor of Stephen C. Foster and which collects all available material relating to the life and work of the great American songster. The bulletin contains most interesting material concerning both the personal history of Foster and the songs which he wrote.

FOSTER’S OUTPUT WAS much greater than may be supposed by those who know him only through a few of his more familiar songs. The bulletin contains a numbered list of 200 songs and compositions known to have been written by Foster. These include, as well as the familiar southern melodies, numerous songs of more conventional type, as well as a variety of dance numbers and other instrumental compositions.

FOSTER WAS TREMENDOUSLY popular in Great Britain, and Mr. Rowland’s mother has told him that William E. Gladstone’s favorite comic song was Foster’s “Camp-town Races.” One does not often associate Britain’s dignified and austere premier with such frivolity.

IN FOSTER’S “ANGELINA” Baker there is a line about “beating on the old jaw bone” which has mystified many, One L. B. Hand, of Harvey, Illinois, clears up the mystery by explaining that the jawbone was at one time actually used as a musical instrument. He describes it as the entire lower jaw bone of a horse that has been exposed to the elements until all the teeth are loose. When struck in time to the music it rattled. This curious instrument is said to have been regularly used by negro minstrels up to about the time of the Civil war.
I AM PERMITTED TO QUOTE a few paragraphs from a letter just received from Mrs. A. G. Leonard by a Grand Forks friend. Mrs. Leonard left Grand Forks early in the winter to make her home with a brother in a suburb of New York city, where she says the weather has been so cold and the snow so deep as to make travel difficult. However, she has been able to spend considerable time in the city, and she writes as follows of a play in which many Grand Forks people feel a sort of propriety interest:

* * *

"WE HAVE SEEN A FEW OF the best things, 'Mary of Scotland,' first, of course. To think that our U. N. D. Max Anderson after twenty years of drudgery on newspapers has perfected his art up to the point of producing such a beautiful and perfect play! It was indeed thrilling to me, having known him as a rather crude but able student."

* * *

"BEFORE THE PLAY WAS written, when he first thought of it, he met Helen Hayes on the train on the way to Hollywood, talked it out with her and asked her to do the part of Mary. Philip Merivale does equally well in his part of Bothwell. Helen Hayes is too small as the history books describe Mary, neither is she beautiful, but she is every inch a queen. There were a number of very intelligent people present the day we attended and we had the opportunity of seeing how pleased Harry Emerson Fosdick was as he sat not far from us.

* * *

"THE PLAY HAS BEEN PUBLISHED and reads almost as well as it acts, even better than 'Elizabeth, the Queen.' Isn't it interesting that in this jazz period in this most sophisticated of modern cities, an historical play of Elizabethan times should play to packed houses all winter while one after another of the plays written to cater to the tastes (?) of New Yorkers fold up after a week's run."
BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENT was made last week of the death of Dr. Wallace N. Stearns, who came to Grand Forks nearly thirty years ago as a member of the faculty of Wesley college, and who during his several years' residence here was prominent in the educational work and social life of the city. The Urbana, Ill., Courier of recent date gives an extended review of the career of Dr. Stearns, who had been for several years director of religious education at MacMurray college, formerly Illinois Women's college, at Jacksonville, Ill.

* * *

DR. STEARNS WAS A NATIVE of Ohio, and a descendant of English ancestors who settled in New England shortly after the arrival of the Pilgrims in the Mayflower. Following his graduation from Ohio Wesleyan university he won degrees from Harvard and Boston university, and for several years he continued his studies in summer sessions at Chicago university, at Oxford and in Berlin. He came to Grand Forks with an experience of several years in educational work, joining the faculty of Fargo college, and eleven years ago he became director of religious education at MacMurray college in Illinois. Three years ago he was incapacitated by illness, and at the time of his death last week he was on leave of absence.

* * *

THE ILLNESS OF DR. Stearns is understood to have resulted from his exertions at a fire at a Washington's birthday anniversary celebration at his college in 1928. Stage draperies in the gymnasium in which the celebration was held took fire and the structure was soon a mass of flames. Dr. Stearns, who was with Mrs. Stearns in the balcony at the time, entered the auditorium from below and worked in the smoke and flames to make sure that none had been left in the burning building. He was badly burned, and although he resumed his work for a time he never recovered completely, and three years ago he was obliged to give up his work entirely.

* * *

DR. STEARNS WAS THE AUTHOR of several books, and was recognized as an authority in his field. During his residence here his geniality and wit made him a welcome member of any company. Unmarried until in middle life, he was joked by his friends upon what was supposed to be his continued bachelorhood, a state which he changed later by marrying Miss Addie G. McClain, who survives him. During the war Dr. Stearns served overseas with the Y. M. C. A., having offered himself for military service and Red Cross work and being rejected in each case because of his age.

SHORTLY AFTER HIS ARRIVAL in Grand Forks Dr. Stearns was a guest at a reception held for him and other newcomers. A lady who met him, supposing him to be married, asked "And where is Mrs. Stearns, doctor?" "Oh, she is with her mother just now," was the reply, without the quiver of an eyelash, and the good lady did not learn for some time that wherever the future Mrs. Stearns might be, she was not at that time aware of her destiny.

* * *

TWO INTERESTING PHOTOGRAPHS have been received from Theodore Bye, who farms eight miles east of Reynolds. One is of half a dozen hailstones which fell in a storm on June 9, 1922, several of them measuring 10 inches in circumference. Two ordinary hen's eggs, photographed with the group, are completely dwarfed by the huge chunks of ice.

* * *

THE OTHER PICTURE, undated, is of a flash of lightning taken at the Bye homestead. The flash is shown following the usual irregular path, but a striking feature is that the flash appears in two distinct lines, isolated and parallel, and in others crossing each other. The effect is that of a two-strand rope which has been partly unraveled. One gathers the impression that there were two separate and simultaneous flashes, sometimes running parallel and sometimes whirling around each other.

* * *

A LETTER FROM AN OLD FRIEND in Ontario quotes the following Ontario farm prices: Wheat 75 cents; butter 25 cents; potatoes one dollar a bag. It is a long time since I have seen potatoes quoted by the bag. That was the common custom back east years ago. Potatoes were handled in grain sacks, and the standard "bag" was 90 pounds. The present price, therefore, would be about 66 cents a bag. In my time (and I think in Ontario was pretty much a local industry, the entire product of the province being consumed in its own homes. This, I believe, is still true. Ontario cities draw heavily on Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island for their potato supply.
DISCUSSING THE PROBLEM of what to do about the widows and orphans whose interests are sometimes said to be injuriously affected by currency devaluation, Will Ropers proposes that the government take over the orphans and look after them, and as to the widows, he would have the government provide them with husbands. The remarriage of widows, however, would have to be optional unless we are to do violence to the principles of Magna Charta. In that historic document it is provided that "no widow shall be distressed to marry herself so long as she has a mind to live without a husband." Other interesting provisions relating to widows to which King John assented at that historic meeting at Runnymede are: "but yet she shall give security that she will not marry without our (the king's) assent, if she holds of us; or without the consent of the lord of whom she holds, if she holds of another." A widow was also permitted in the mansion house of her husband forty days after his death, during which time her dower was to be assigned.

THAT OLD DOCUMENT makes interesting reading, not merely because it guarantees certain liberties, but because in the state of society at that time it was thought necessary to guarantee in writing rights which we have become accustomed to take as matters of course. The major provisions in the first ten amendments to our constitution, including the one that no person be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law, upon which many of our modern judicial decisions are based, are merely restatements of provisions in Magna Charta, which King John signed at the point of the sword more than seven hundred years ago.

A CORRESPONDENT ASKS for the solution to the checker problem contributed about two weeks ago by the Y. M. C. A. checker club. The solution furnished by the club runs as follows:


J. W. WOLFORD, OF OAK street, who made mention some time ago of the old-fashioned shoe pegs, describes the method by which he made them when he did occasional cobbling in his youth. Of this he says:

"I would select a straight piece of gray ash and saw off blocks the length of peg I desired, mark the proper size wanted and take a knife, split in slabs and point each side and then split. I could soon have quite a supply. I also have a bone which my grandfather used to polish the edge of shoe soles."

THE METHOD OF MAKING shoe pegs which I was taught was a little different. The wood, usually maple, was sawn in blocks as Mr. Wolford describes. The block was wound tightly with waxed thread, and grooves were cut in the surface, running at right angles. That left a series of sharp points, each point representing a peg. Then the block was cracked each way with a knife and the string was unwound. My grandfather had in his kit several bones such as Mr. Wolford mentions.

MAKING A "WAX END," THAT is, the waxed thread used by shoemakers, was quite a trick. Waxing and twisting were simple enough, but the proper fixing of the bristle on the end was not so easy. Harness-makers use needles, but there are many kinds of work on shoes where needles will not work, therefore the thread was tipped with a coarse, strong bristle. The bristles more desirable for this purpose at that time came from Russia. Those from domestic hogs were too fine and soft. I have often wondered on what sort of hogs those coarse Russian bristles grew.
IT GIVES ME PLEASURE TO report that on this day, February 13, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, the tulips are up. Not all of them, of course, and those that are showing are not up very far, but here and there along the row, tiny pale-green shoots are showing, indicating that the plants that have been sleeping all winter are bestirring themselves and coming up for air, even though the snow lies deep on the lawn only a few feet away. This is fully two weeks earlier than I have seen the tulips showing above the surface in any former years. However, there is no way of knowing the exact date in any year on which the first shoot showed above the surface. Each time the discovery was unexpected, as I was not looking for tulips, but observing the condition of the soil, and each time I was surprised to see signs of growth.

THIS PARTICULAR BED HAPPENS to be well situated for earliness. The bulbs are planted in a row on the south side of the house, quite close to the basement wall. There is complete protection from the north wind, full exposure to sunshine, and the leakage of some heat through the basement wall. Last fall the soil was unfrozen when the first snow fell, and during most of the winter a heavy drift has covered it. Recently the drift has melted away and the earth is exposed.

I HAVE LONG SINCE GOTTEN over worrying over the premature growth of tulips. They seem to stand unlimited freezing and thawing even when in bloom. One year a hard frost caught a lot of the plants in full bloom and I supposed they were ruined. They were so thoroughly frozen that the stalks were masses of ice crystals. But not a leaf wilted and not a petal dropped.

IN THAT PARTICULAR place I have had only Darwins, which are tall and vigorous, but late-flowering. The plants started early, but it took them a long time for them to bloom. Last fall I planted early bulbs in front of the Darwins, and if they all do well there should be a lot of early bloom and an extended flowering season. The breeder tulips are similar to the Darwins in growth and flowering habit, and have strikingly variegated colors, but I haven't yet found a place for them in my garden.

SOME TIME AGO AN INQUIRER asked in the New York Times Book Review for a jingle about tobacco being a dirty weed. Correspondents have supplied these lines: Tobacco is a dirty weed, I like it. It satisfies no normal need, I like it. It makes you thin, it makes you lean, It takes the hair right off your bean; It's the worst darn stuff I've ever seen. I like it! This doggerel is ascribed by one writer to G. L. Hemminger, and by another to Henry James, of Haviland, N. Y. I don't know where the honor lies.

ANOTHER BIT OF VERSE ON the subject which I committed to memory in childhood is: Tobacco is a filthy weed That from the devil did proceed. It fouls the mouth and soils the clothes, And makes a chimney of the nose. That was published as a serious contribution to the literature against tobacco. Much good it did me!

IT IS PRETTY DIFFICULT TO get over to a youngster some of the statements made concerning the awful effects of the use of tobacco and liquor under any circumstances and in no matter what minute quantities when the youngster has before him all the time the experience of members of his own family and of his friends who use one or both in moderation, and who live to die of old age and seem to enjoy good health and the other good things of existence. I suspect that more would be accomplished by pointing out admitted dangers than by waving score-crows and designing fearsome hobgoblins.
I HAVE JUST MET E. A. Mills, Great Northern veteran, for the first time since his return from his vacation trip to his old home on Prince Edward Island. He has been back for some time, but it happened that we did not meet until just the other day. Mr. Mills left the island 51 years ago and he had never been back until his recent visit. Most of us, in returning to the scenes of our youth after long absence, find startling changes. Mr. Mills found changes, it is true, but they were less marked than are usually found in such cases.

SOME OF THE CHANGES noted by Mr. Mills are due to the heavy drain made on the island manhood by the World war. Partly because of its location and partly because of the fact that most of its people are familiar with the sea, Prince Edward made unusually large and very early contribution to the overseas forces of the Allies. Its little contingent participated in many of the early engagements where the casualties were terrible, and it is said that not more than one man in thirty of those who went overseas from the island returned unhurt.

THIS LEFT THE ISLAND short of man power, a condition which has been reflected in the agriculture and other industries of the province. Once the island was heavily timbered, but as the soil is quite uniformly fertile, the farms were pretty thoroughly cleared in the early days. In recent years many formerly cultivated fields have reverted to forest. In such sections nature has produced a fine growth of timber, mostly spruce, many of the trees standing 50 or more feet high.

PRINCE EDWARD, SAYS MR. Mills, has not been caught in the swift current which seems to be sweeping most of the rest of the world along. Life there is still quiet and leisurely, as it was two generations ago. Agriculture and fishing are the two main industries, and these are carried on in an atmosphere of calmness which seems strange in this period of speed and excitement. Cash returns from these activities are not large, but in a country as self-contained the need for money is not great. The people live quiet lives, and most of them have time to visit with friends.

IT WAS IN PRINCE EDWARD island that fox farming on a commercial scale was first started, and this has become an important industry. It has been less profitable in recent years than at first because of the low price of furs. However, those engaged in it seem to be satisfied with the returns. Other furs are produced commercially, and Mr. Mills saw some remarkably fine mink during his visit.

A BIT OF INFORMATION concerning Maxwell Anderson comes to me from a friend who was one of Anderson's classmates at the University of North Dakota, and who, for the purposes of this paragraph, shall be nameless. Neither of these students was at all times prepared for recitation, and when there was an appearance of rough weather ahead these two, communicating by means of private signals, would seek to change the course of the discussion. Anderson would express an opinion more or less related to some phase of the lesson, and would support it by extended argument. His girl classmate would undertake to prove that he was all wrong, and the debate would monopolize the attention of instructor and class. The instructor was pleased with the evidence of interest and would forget all about embarrassing questions which otherwise might have been asked.

THE GOOD PROFESSOR, WHO was loved by all the class, and tricked unmercifully, would call on Mr. Jones to recite, and Stefansson, impersonating Mr. Jones, would recite for him. The professor could not distinguish one member of the class from another. With such vocal changes as seemed to be proper, Stefansson would recite in turn for each member of the class.

THUS EVERYTHING WENT smoothly for a time, too smoothly to suit Stefansson, who was never happy unless he was stirring something up. One day he had recited admirably for several members of the class, when his own name was called. The spirit of perversity took possession of him, and he replied, “Not prepared, sir.” For a moment there was the silence of shocked surprise. Then the class burst into a roar. Stefansson, who knew that stuff backward and forward, and had recited perfectly for the entire class, was “not prepared!”
President Lincoln occasionally went over the heads of his subordinates in matters of routine, in a manner which the subordinates conceived to be subversive of discipline. For humanitarian reasons he subjected them to severe punishment. He was not tolerant of wilful misconduct, but he had the habit of taking into account motives as well as acts. One pleasant story told of him relates to an incident in which no offense was committed, but it shows the human side of Lincoln just the same. Seventy years ago Charles L. Hickman, a boy of 15 in West Virginia, wrote Lincoln asking for the discharge of his brother, who was then serving with the Union forces before Richmond. The boy explained that his brother was needed at home because his mother was ill and his father had recently been killed in an accident. The lad did not expect that any attention would be paid to the letter, but he wrote it to humor his mother. A little later the brother returned home bearing a discharge issued, "by special order of the president." Several years ago the writer of the letter, who is still living, wondered if his boyish letter might still be in existence. He wrote the war department, and, greatly to his surprise, received the letter, which is now one of his cherished possessions. Doubtless the files of the department contain many documents of similar character which have never been reclaimed.

IN THE COURSE OF A BUSINESS TRANSACTION Andrew Mellon, afterward secretary of the treasury, came into possession of shares of stock in a distillery, a fact with which he was often reproached. Similarly Abraham Lincoln was often charged with having been a saloon keeper. As part owner of a general store Lincoln did sell whisky, as most small merchants did at that time. But he didn't like selling whisky and had no particular liking for selling anything, so he got out of the store business.

* * *

IN ONE OF THEIR FAMOUS debates Douglas spoke disparagingly of his opponent's business career, saying that Lincoln, having failed at splitting rails, keeping store, selling whisky and practicing law, was now trying his hand at politics. Lincoln turned the tables in his reply. He admitted that he had sold whisky, but said that while he had left the back of the counter his honorable friend had maintained his position on the other side. The reply took with the crowd, for everyone knew that Douglas liked his toddy.

* * *

THE NEW YORK TIMES IS informed that the weather in the east was not only colder than at any other time since official records have been kept, but that it was colder than at any other time since Washington and his ragged men spent that terrible winter at Valley Forge. That's something to boast of.

* * *

THE TIMES TAKES ISSUE with a correspondent who refers to the vast amount of suffering which a temperature of 14 below zero brings to the homeless and destitute. Suffering for those in that group, says the Times, begins at a much higher temperature. For the suffering is acute at 14 above zero. At the lower temperature, says the Times, those who have good homes and are well clothed suffer.

* * *

THAT IS WHERE THE DIFFERENCE between east and west comes in. At any very low temperature has ever been reached in this bear suffering, east or west. But here in the northwest no temperature has ever been reached in which the well-built cottage cannot be kept perfectly comfortable, and none in which one may not move about comfortably outdoors in ordinary winter garb provided the wind does not blow. And if there is much wind, nobody is comfortable anywhere.
FOR MANY YEARS THE ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR HAS BEEN ONE OF THE STOCK PROPERTIES OF THE HUMORIST. A FRIEND TELLS A STORY CONCERNING ONE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA FACULTY MEMBERS OF MANY YEARS AGO, WHO, ACCORDING TO THE BEST OF THE NARRATOR’S RECOLLECTION, WAS DR. THOMAS. ABSENT-MINDEDNESS IS USUALLY ASSOCIATED WITH A SLOW, DREAMY TEMPERAMENT. DR. THOMAS WAS NOT OF THAT TYPE. HE WAS QUICK AND NERVOUS, NEVERTHLESS, HE IS SAID TO HAVE BECOME SO COMPLETELY ABSENT-MINDED THAT IF HE HAD BEEN ABSENT FROM HIS OWN CLASS ROOM, TO HANG HIS HAT ON A PARTICULAR PEG, HE NEVER LOOKED TO SEE IF THE PEG WAS THERE; HE TOOK THAT FOR GRANTED. ALSO, HE TOOK FOR GRANTED THE FACT THAT IF HE SLAPPED HIS HAT AGAINST THE WALL AT THE SPOT WHERE THE PEG WAS SUPPOSED TO BE, IT WOULD STAY THERE. HE NEVER LOOKED TO SEE. SOME STUDENT CONCEIVED THE BRILLIANT IDEA OF REMOVING THE PEG, JUST TO SEE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN. HE DID SO, AND WANTED RESULTS. DR. THOMAS APPROACHED, SLAMMED UP HIS HAT AS USUAL AND STARTED ON. THE HAT FELL TO THE FLOOR. THE DOCTOR RECOVERED IT AND SLAMMED IT UP AGAIN IN ITS USUAL PLACE. AGAIN IT FELL. THE NARRATOR SAYS THAT THIS PROCESS WAS REPEATED THREE OR FOUR TIMES BEFORE THE DOCTOR, CONCENTRATING HIS THOUGHTS ON THE IMMEDIATE PRESENT, DISCOVERED THE ABSENCE OF THE PEG.


THOUGH IT IS ONLY FEBRUARY AND IN MANY PLACES THE GROUND IS WHITE WITH SNOW, IT IS THE SEASON FOR SEED CATALOGS, AND AMATEUR GARDENERS HAVE VISIONS OF FLOWERS AND VEGETABLES WHICH COMPARE IN SIZE AND COLOR WITH THOSE SHOWN IN THE PICTURES. THERE HAS BEEN MUCH JESTING OVER THOSE PICTURES, A PREVAILING IMPRESSION BEING THAT THE ILLUSTRATIONS ARE MERE BLACK-LINED REPRESENTATIONS OF THAT WHICH EXISTS ONLY IN THE IMAGINATION OF THE ARTIST. THE FACT IS THAT IN FORM, SIZE, AND COLOR NATURE DUPLICATES, AND OFTEN SURPASSES ANYTHING THAT CAN BE FOUND IN THE CATALOGS. A FEW SELECTED SPECIMENS, SKILLFULLY GROUPED, MAY STRIKE THE EYE WITH GREATER FORCE FROM THE PRINTED PAGE THAN WHEN FOUND IN THEIR NATURAL SURROUNDINGS IN THE GARDEN, BUT IN THE SUCCESSFUL GARDEN ALL THE POINTS OF EXCELLENCE ARE THERE.

ONE OF THE DRAWBACKS OF OUR LATITUDE IS THE LENGTH OF THE WINTER AND CORRESPONDING SHORTNESS OF SUMMER. IN THE AVERAGE SEASON TENDER ANNUALS MUST MAKE THEIR GROWTH AND YIELD THEIR HARVEST IN A LITTLE MORE THAN THREE MONTHS—BETWEEN FROST AND FROST—IF THEY ARE TO BE GROWN ENTIRELY OUT OF DOORS. FOR MANY PLANTS THIS PERIOD IS TOO SHORT, AND IF SATISFACTORY RESULTS ARE TO BE ACHIEVED, PLANTS MUST BE STARTED INSIDE AND ADVANCE OF WARM WEATHER.

I AM AWARE THAT THERE ARE THOSE WHO INSIST THAT ONE CAN GET JUST AS GOOD RESULTS FROM PLANTING DIRECTLY OUT OF DOORS WHEN THE GROUND HAS WARMED UP AS BY TRANSPLANTING NURSERY OR HOTHED STOCK. I THINK THAT DEPENDS ON HOW THE INDOOR STOCK IS HANDLE. PLANTS GROWN INSIDE, IF IMPROPERLY TREATED, WILL NOT BE SATISFACTORY. IF CROWDED THEY WILL BE WEAK AND SPINDLY. THEY MAY BECOME ROOT-BOUND, STUNTED BY LACK OF WATER OR SOFTENED BY TOO MUCH. CARELESSLY TRANSPLANTED THEY WILL SUFFER SHOCK FROM WHICH THEY MAY NEVER RECOVER, BUT I AM SATISFIED THAT WITH MANY OF OUR ANNUALS IT PAYS TO TRANSPLANT WELL GROWN PLANTS AND TO DO IT CAREFULLY, IN PREFERENCE TO PLANTING THE SEED DIRECTLY OUT OF DOORS.

RAPID GROWERS AND EARLY-FLOWERING PLANTS, OF WHICH THERE ARE MANY, NEED NOT BE GROWN INSIDE, AS THEY WILL MATURE PROPERLY IN OUR USUAL SUMMER SEASON, BUT FOR THOSE WHICH REQUIRE A FAIRLY LONG SEASON IT PAYS TO START INSIDE AND TO TRANSPLANT CAREFULLY.
DEEP SNOW, SUCH AS there is toward the Canadian boundary and in Manitoba, reminds P. R. Fields, district manager of the International Harvester Co., of an experience in 1906, when he had headquarters at Aberdeen, S. D., but also covered the western North Dakota territory.

Snow was deep that winter in the Missouri valley counties, and train service was uncertain, for in many places the rails lay between great mountains of snow, and even a moderate breeze would fill the cuts and render them impassable. One of his trips took Mr. Fields to Wishek. He got there, and there he stayed for 22 days, in a small town where German was the prevailing language, and where the only contact with the outside world was by wire.

THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER, the News, a weekly publication, ran out of patent inside at the end of the first week of the blockade. In order to maintain the legal standing of the paper and the validity of the legal notices which it contained, it was necessary for the paper to be published without the omission of an issue. For the next issue a supply of wrapping paper was obtained from the local merchants, and the paper was printed on that. But when the next publication date came around, and the blockade had not been broken, there was no more wrapping paper. That week the paper was published on thin muslin. Mr. Fields had a copy of that issue which he preserved for many years.

THAT IS THE ONLY INSTANCE of which I ever heard of a North Dakota paper being printed on cloth. I think that in a few other cases wrapping paper was used in emergencies. During the Civil war several southern papers were published occasionally on wall paper, supplies of this being available after other paper had been exhausted.

SNOW CONDITIONS THIS winter are spotted. In the Red river valley generally the supply has been liberal, but most of the snow in the western part of the state dis-
A LETTER FROM JOHN N. Kirch, former mail clerk on the Duluth line with headquarters at Crookston, and now of Pasadena, Cal., encloses clippings from the Pasadena Star News, in which J. W. Foley, former North Dakota newspaper man and post, conducts a daily column entitled “The Top of the Evening.” John writes of attending the North Dakota picnic February 3, where Foley was the principal speaker. The day, says John, was beautiful and the attendance good, though not quite up to the mark of some former years.

JOHN IS INTERESTED IN EVERYTHING that pertains to the northwest, and he likes to keep people in touch with each other. He receives occasional clippings from this column from his brother Adolph in Crookston and passes them on to Thorval Tunheim, dramatic editor of the Star News, and a former North Dakota and northern Minnesota newspaper man. Tunheim in turn passes the clippings on to Foley. If Jim finds anything in them worth mentioning he hopes he will forward it to help himself, as I am helping myself to this poem from his column:

STRAIGHTS

By James W. Foley.

The glad heart passed the weary heart
With scarce a word to say,
The glad heart passed the weary heart
And went upon its way.

But the sad heart met the weary heart
And bade it a good day,
The sad heart met the weary heart
With a kind word to say.

For the glad heart and the weary heart
Were strangers on the way,
And the glad heart passed the weary heart
With scarce a word to say,

But the sad heart and the weary heart
Had trodden the same way,
And the sad heart met the weary heart
With a kind word to say.

But the sad heart knew the weary heart,
Its every pulsing beat,
And the sad heart met the weary heart
With tender love and sweet.

The glad heart passed the weary heart
That walked its way so slow,
It did not know the weary heart,
How could the glad heart know?

For it had borne no heavy load,
And it had known no care,
And it had walked no stony road

But the sad heart knew the weary heart,
Its every troubled way,
And the sad heart met the weary heart
With a kind word to say.

The glad heart was a merry heart
And sang a merry song,
And so it passed the weary heart
That dragged its way along.

And one sped gaily on its way,
And one was halting and slow,
Nor the glad heart knew the weary heart,
How could the glad heart know?

AT THE NORTH DAKOTA PICTNIC

Foley told of pioneer days in North Dakota, a subject on which he is qualified to speak, for he came to the territory at the age of 4 when his father, an army officer at St. Louis, was transferred to Dakota. In later years the elder Foley was custodian of the de Mores properties at Medora and Jim became editor of the Bismarck Tribune. In his address Jim referred to the fact that in the early days in North Dakota there were no 100 story buildings, but there were 100 story men and women, some of whom are needed today. When the whites killed the Indians, he said, it was a heroic battle, but when it was the other way around it was a massacre.
WHEN I PERMIT MYSELF TO think about it I regard with some anxiety the prospect of becoming 100 years old, for that is clearly a dangerous age. A few there have been who reached the age of 100 and escaped the hazards of that period, to live on for many years thereafter. There was "Old" Parr, who boasted of more than 150 years and was honored at the court of King Charles because of his great achievement.

There are exceptions. The rule is that when one reaches 100 he is not likely to last much longer. Almost every day the papers tell of some person dying shortly after reaching his or her hundredth birthday. North Dakota has lost a whole flock of centenarians during the past year. Two died last week at about 102 or 103. Thus far nobody has been able to do anything about it. Most decidedly, the risk is there and it behooves all who are approaching that age to be on their guard.

W. P. Davies

THE DEATH OF WILLIAM Travers Jerome a short time ago has brought again into print names once familiar to the public, but now pretty well forgotten, names of persons against whom Jerome waged the implacable warfare which characterized his service as district attorney of New York county. It was Jerome who conducted the raid against the notorious Canfield gambling place in which Reginald Vanderbilt was reported to have lost $500,000 in five nights of play. He prosecuted Harry Thaw for the shooting of Stanford White. It was his ventilation of insurance scandals which led to the creation of the Armstrong committee by the state legislature under whose direction Charles Evans Hughes effected reforms and laid the foundation for the career which led to his present position as chief justice of the United States supreme court.

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GUNNAR ODDSON, OF HALLSON, N. D., who is only 70, may prove to be one of the exceptions. At his present rate of going he seems likely to stand even the shock of becoming 100. He is the man who ran the other day the eleven miles from Hallson to Cavalier in 1 hour and 30 minutes without notice and without preparation. Missing a ride which he had expected, and resenting the taunts of friends in the village store, he divested himself of his heavier clothing and started afoot although the going was heavy because the day was warm. An hour and a half later he reported his arrival at Cavalier.

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IN THE MOUNTAIN DISTRICTS of Norway some astonishing feats of running have been performed. There the people are accustomed to walking long distances on mountain paths that are not intended for vehicles, and where speed is required it is developed to a remarkable degree. Also we read of almost unbelievable runs made by messengers in the Andes and in the Himalayas. It is not unusual for those runners to travel 24 hours at a stretch, without food or rest.
EVERYONE WHO KNOWS Fred L. Goodman knows that he is a lover of books, and that he is familiar with the contents of a great many of them. Not everyone knows that his love of literature began almost in infancy, if, in fact, it was not born in him. Fred began to go to school at the age of three. Living on a farm near a country school, he noticed that other children went to school, and he demanded the same privilege. He was so insistent about it that his mother yielded and prepared to send him to school. Then an obstacle appeared. Fred had noticed that the other children carried books to school, and he had no books to carry. Without books he refused to budge. Fred's mother, who must have been a lady of unusual discernment and resourcefulness, saw the reasonableness of his position at once, and immediately supplied the deficiency. From the attic she dug up an imposing volume on the diseases of animals, and with that book Fred marched off to school. How much of the information contained in the book he absorbed is not of record, but it is a fact that in later life he became known, not only for his love of literature, but for his familiarity with animal husbandry.

PRESS DISPATCHES SAY that the recent storm in New York was the worst that has been experienced since 1888. It is difficult to compare storms in intensity, and, regardless of what the exact meteorological facts may be, it is probable that the storm which swept New York in March, 1888, will go down in history as "The Great Blizzard." In that storm some 400 lives were lost in the north Atlantic states. The storm is memorable among other things for having caused the death of Roscoe Conkling, who had been a United States senator for many years, and whose resignation, together with that of Senator Platt, was the spectacular climax of the quarrel of these two senators with President Garfield over federal patronage. During the memorable March storm Conkling left his hotel and was found later on the street, exhausted from his struggle with the elements. He died soon after from the effects of his exposure.

IN THIS PART OF THE COUNTRY the cutter is an almost unknown vehicle. Usually it is possible to dig up one or two for a winter parade, and occasionally one is brought to town from some farm, but, while not quite extinct, the cutter has become a decided rarity in this vicinity. It is not so across the border. Last Sunday, on the way from Winnipeg, I saw a dozen or more cutters, presumably carrying their occupants to church. Most of them were somewhat weatherbeaten, their pristine gloss having been dulled by years of exposure and use, but they were, at least in form, the traditional cutters and in some cases they were drawn by horses that stepped off at a right lively gait, recalling many rides that were taken long ago.

THE MANITOBA FARMERS along the Red River have clung rather tenaciously to horse-drawn vehicles. In the summer buggies are used, quite as in the old days, and as a matter of convenience to all concerned, the horse-drawn vehicle takes the place of the buggy. Quite naturally and properly, much sentiment attaches to the old cutter. It played an important part in eastern life. There was cold and stormy weather back east, as there is yet, but usually the severe spells were of brief duration. With a well-beaten road, a temperature just a few degrees below freezing, a good horse, a congenial companion, a set of jingling bells, and plenty of wraps, a cutter ride on a moonlight night was a real joy. People lived rather close together, and villages were not far apart. A drive of four or five miles would take one to the farm fric, the village entertainment or the church "teammeeting."

THERE WERE SLEIGH rides on the prairie in the early days, many of them, but few of the settlers had cutters. Instead the wagon box was mounted on runners, or an improvised sled was used, and as a rule it was necessary to take extra precautions against frost-bite. Bare faces cannot be exposed long to the wind at a temperature away below zero without danger of freezing. One device for the promotion of comfort which I have known to be used quite effectively was to heat quantities of oats before a ride, and place the heated oats in sacks which were used for cushions and foot-warmers. Oats retain heat for a long time, and a cushion of hot oats would insure comfort through quite a long drive.
SOME OF THE PUBLISHED "solutions" of recent monetary problems have left readers more puzzled than they were at the beginning. And there are problems crowding out of the monetary changes on which even competent writers sometimes stub their toes. There is an instance of the latter kind in an article in the Literary Digest by George Wilfred Wright in which there is discussed a racket in which owners of old gold are victimized by means of sharp practice. The recent great increase in the dollar price of gold has given unexpected value to disused gold ornaments and trinkets which have lain almost forgotten for years in cabinets and dresser drawers, and buyers have been collecting these articles to sell at the advanced price. According to Mr. Wright's article, certain individuals have been going from house to house buying such scrap gold as they can find.

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IT IS IN THE WEIGHING OF the gold that the trick comes. According to the story the slick buyer carries a small pair of scales which he sets up, and in one side of the scale he places the gold pieces and in the other enough ordinary pennies to balance them. He refers to the familiar table which says that in Troy weight twenty pennyweights make an ounce, and the housewife accepts the weight of an ordinary penny as an official pennyweight. Mr. Wright's explanation is that the American pennyweight's only about half of the Troy pennyweight, therefore the owner of the gold is defrauded of about half its value.

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THE PROCESS COULD BE worked exactly as described, and the owner would be defrauded. But the writer has got his facts reversed. If the penny is too light the gold would appear to weigh more pennyweights than it does, and the rascal would be defrauding himself. The fact is that the penny is too heavy. The Troy pennyweight contains 221/2 grains. The ordinary American penny weighs 48 grains, so that in such a case as described the buyer would be getting more than two pennyweights where he pays for only one.

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MANY YEARS AGO A WHEAT buyer in a small town had a scurvy trick played on him, involving weights. He had bought grain in that neighborhood for years, and was the only buyer there. He was a man in whom the people of the community had perfect confidence. A new buyer set up business in the same town, and the older man looked for lively competition, but believed that he would be able to hold his own.

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WHEN THE WHEAT SELLING season arrived the old buyer was surprised and then deeply hurt, to see one after another of his old customers drive by his place and unload at the elevator of his rival. He could not understand why his old friends should not at least give him an opportunity to bid on their wheat. He nursed his disappointment in silence for some time, and then asked an old friend what it was all about. The friend was evasive, but being pressed for an answer he explained.

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"WE HAD ALWAYS BEEN satisfied with you," he said, "and thought you were giving us a square deal. But when Jones (the other buyer) came he told some of us to watch out for you, as you were cheating us on weights. At first we wouldn't believe him, but he told us that if we would examine the weights on your scale we would find that the lower side of your weights had been bored out until they were much lighter than they should be. Several of us watched our chance and looked over your weights and found them just as he had said. It hit us pretty hard, but after that we couldn't do anything else than quit you."

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THE BUYER WAS BOTH angry and relieved. "Did you ever figure the thing out?" he asked. "Why, no, it didn't need any figuring," was the reply, "we say the weights with our own eyes."

"But didn't you realize that if my weights were too light it took more of them to balance a bushel of wheat, and that my scales would register more pounds than the wheat actually weighed?" By gum!" said his friend. None of us ever thought of that.

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THE BUYER EXPLAINED that when weights are cast they are of only approximate accuracy, unusually being too heavy. They are then bored to standard. If bored too deeply, which sometimes happens, leads is run into the cavity to make them balance, and the lead is stamped with the official seal. Jones bought no more wheat in that community, and the old buyer again enjoyed the respect and confidence of his neighbors, who were a little shamefaced over the incident.
IT IS SOMETIMES SAID THAT
the more different things are the
more they are the same. One is
sometimes tempted to concur in
that bit of odd philosophy when
he compares certain features of
the past with those of the pres­
et and observes the strong sim­
ilarity in practice and motive not­
withstanding the changes which
have occurred meanwhile in oth­
er departments. Our fore­
fathers dressed differently from
us, traveled and communicated dif­
ferently, and acted differently in
many respects, but in the qualities
which go to make up what we call
human nature there does not seem
to have been much change.

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I HAVE RECEIVED FROM
Dr. G. M. Williamson a copy of a recent issue of the Picton Gazette,
published at Picton, Ont., Dr. Wil­
liamson's old home town, which
celebrates the 100th anniversary
of the creation of Prince Edward
county, of which Picton is the
county seat. The county occupies
a peninsula near the east end of
Lake Ontario, and because of its
position it was one of the earliest
districts in Ontario to be settled by
white men. The paper reproduces
the proclamation creating the
county, which proclamation was is­
sued under authority of William
the fourth, king, defender of the
faith, etc., by the lieutenant gover­
nor of the province, Sir John Col­
borne, whose headquarters were at
York, which afterwards became
known as Toronto.

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THERE IS GIVEN ALSO SOME
correspondence which appeared at
the time in the Gazette of that day
relating to local political affairs. It
appears from the correspondence
that men disputed as vigorously
over political affairs a century ago
as they do now, and that they
were equally prone to attribute to
each other, rightly or wrongly,
unworthy motives.

* * *

MEETINGS HAD BEEN HELD
at various places for the nomina­
tion of candidates of different
groups for parliament. Several of
these meetings were held in village
inns; others at private residences.
One correspondent protests against
the privacy which attended the
proceedings of one group and
makes charges of gag rule and
similar abuses. Another expresses
his opinion of the first correspond­
ent in a letter which is published
verbatim in spelling which must
have been a trial to the composi­
tors. Possibly some of the things
of which we complain today are
inheritances from the "brave days
of old."

* * *

AMONG THE OLD HOUSES IN
Grand Forks are some which con­
tain oak timber cut along the Red
river and sawed in little local mills.
I wonder if any of them now con­
tain lumber cut in southern Ontario
and shipped up the lakes. One
such cargo destined for Grand
Forks was brought to Duluth in
1879 on a vessel on which James A.
Thorburn, now of Bottineau, sailed
with his father, Captain John
Thorburn, who was captain of the
ship, the Tecumseh. Mr. Thorburn
writes:

* * *

"IN THE SUMMER OF 1879
my father, the late Captain
John Thorburn, sailed the Tecumseh,
owned by the Guelph Lumber com­
pany, at that time the largest boat
owned in Canada. Her engines
were built on the Clyde in Scot­
land, being the first fore-and-aft
condensing compound type on the
lakes. The Guelph Lumber com­
pany owned sawmills at Parry
Sound and planing mills at Sarnia,
where the rough lumber was
dressed. I was with my father on
this trip from Sarnia to Duluth
with a cargo of 900,000 square feet
of dressed lumber consigned to
Grand Forks. There were then
only ten or twelve houses in Du­
luth and no such place as West
Superior."

* * *

IT SEEMS A LITTLE ODD TO
think of lumber for use in Grand
Forks being shipped all the way
from Ontario and carried right
through the dense pine forests of
northern Minnesota, which were
then practically untouched by the
lumberman. In the intervening
time those forests have practically
disappeared, and lumber for build­
ing purposes in northern Minne­
sota, right in that former forest
area, is now being shipped in from
the Pacific coast. Southern On­
tario has practically no merchant­
able timber left, but the mills are
still running in the northern part
of the province, north of Lake Su­
perior and the Georgian bay. In
that section, late in the day, timber
is being intelligently conserved.
A BRIEF ASSOCIATED PRESS dispatch tells of the death in New York of Corse Payton, veteran actor and manager of stock companies. After a lifetime spent in association with the stage Payton died at the age of 68 in the charity ward of a New York hospital. To only a few persons nowadays will the name be at all familiar. To others it will revive memories of the stage as it was in the closing decade of the last century.

CORSE PAYTON WAS A stock company man, devoting himself almost entirely to entertainment of the “ten, twent’, third” variety, the slang designation indicating the low price charged for seats in various parts of the house. The repertoire included lurid melodrama, light comedy and an occasional adventure into the realm of the more dignified drama.

THE PAYTON SHOWS toured the western circuit in the summer, when the big companies were off the road and engagements of several weeks in one place could be obtained. This cut down traveling expenses and made possible the lower price schedule Payton may have visited Grand Forks more than once, but I remember one long summer engagement during which he packed the old Metropolitan night after night.

PAYTON HIMSELF WAS A tall, lank fellow whose taste in clothing ran to loud checks. His favorite exercise in those days was walking—we knew nothing about golf, and in his screaming suits he was a conspicuous figure in the landscape as he strode across the prairie between matinee and evening performance. He was in no sense a great actor, but he fitted well into the sort of entertainment which he gave.

ON ONE OCCASION HIS quick decision, aided by his long legs, prevented what might have been a bad fire, and what would assuredly have been a disastrous panic. During the business of the play Payton was seated, writing, near a stage window which was dressed with the usual lace curtains. A wandering breeze blew a curtain into a gas jet and the flimsy material took fire. Quickly the fire ran upward, and in a moment it would have reached the borders and other scenic properties. Payton saw it. With one stride he was on top of the table and with his long arms he reached up and caught the curtain at the top of the flame. Running his hands rapidly down the curtain he smothered the fire. Then he sat down and resumed his writing as if nothing had happened. It was all done so quickly that the audience had not time to grasp the meaning of it until it was all over. There was a slight murmur through the house and nothing more. Had it not been for Payton’s quick action there would have been a rush for the door and a list of killed and wounded.

DURING THE YEARS I HAVE seen Payton mentioned as the manager of little stock companies and other small enterprises. Late­ly he seems to have dropped out completely. In his time he helped to entertain thousands, but he seems to have had no friend near to cheer him as he was about to pass into the great beyond.

IT APPEARS THAT AFTER all I have been using no other person’s initials, and nobody has been using mine. W. G. Davies, of the state engineer’s office at Devils Lake, writes that the Devils Lake paper got his initials wrong, so there is no conflict.

MR. DAVIES WRITES THAT his ancestors came from Wales to Pennsylvania, and that in his engineering work in this country and Canada he has met few persons with the same family name with whom he could not trace a common origin. My own paternal grandfather, of Welsh descent, came from England, just across the Welsh border, and also settled in Pennsylvania. His ten children were born at Johnstown, but I do not know that he had other relatives on this side of the water. Anyway, it is interesting to speculate on the possibility of kinship, running away back possibly to the days of Llewellyn.
ALF EASTGATE, OF LARIMORE, who knows more about the wild life of the northwest than most other persons do, is heartily in favor of bird sanctuaries and other wild life sanctuaries, but he believes that in addition to providing sanctuaries we must provide for game birds both winter food and protection from vermin if we are to see any material increase in the number of game birds. In relation to the matter of winter food Alf writes: "A news paragraph in the paper from Lakota stating that Sam Foster is feeding some chickens and partridges at his place calls to mind some other times that Sam has fed prairie chickens. More than thirty years ago, when he owned what is now the Old Settlers' park at Stump Lake I met Sam one fall day, just as winter was setting in, on his way to the woods, as he called it, with a load of wheat. I asked him if he had so much wheat that he couldn't hold all his crop. Sam didn't care to talk about it, as he knew that I knew there were several places in which the price of that load of wheat could be used.

"HE FINALLY CONFESSIONED that he was taking the wheat to the woods to feed the birds. He said 'You know I like to hunt, and when there is a bad storm and I sit down comfortably at home to smoke, the pipe tastes lots better when I feel that the chickens know just where to find enough to eat when the storm is over.'"

"THE GRANARY IN THE woods into which he dumped the wheat wouldn't have held potatoes, as there was a big crack all around the edge of the floor. It made a perfect self-feeder for the chickens. At that time I was a game warden, and I knew how well Sam liked to hunt. The open season for chickens began right in the middle of harvest, and I sometimes suspected that at the beginning of harvest, before work became pressing, he might slip out and shoot himself a mess of chickens. If he did I never caught him, nor was I anxious to do so, for I knew that if we had a few more Sam Fosters in the state there would not be so much talk about our reaching the end of chicken shooting."

"PRAIRIE CHICKENS ARE quite different in habit and desirability from sparrows, but around town, and especially away from the timber and along the river, the sparrows are about the only evidence of wild life that we see in the winter. The little fellows are apt to become pests in the summer, but they are cheerful little rascals, and it is pleasant to see them around when all other feathered life has deserted us.

AFTER READING THAT birds like suet I tried that food on the sparrows. Ultimately they got away with it, but they would eat almost anything else in preference. I suppose suet is liked by birds accustomed to an insect diet, but the sparrows do not seem to care for it. They live chiefly on seeds and will make short work of a handful of wheat, millet seed or bread crumbs.

LAST SUMMER THE AUTHORITIES in the county of Kent, England, were perplexed by the raids of unknown dogs on flocks of sheep in the county. Night after night, in various parts of the county, sheep were found killed, presumably by dogs, but the most careful search failed to identify the culprits. There are several hunt clubs in the county, each with its pack of hounds, and at first it was supposed that the killers were among these packs. But in each case the dogs in the kennels were visited by constables and the animals were found properly confined, with no stains of blood upon them.

RAIDS CONTINUED FOR SEVERAL weeks, and then were discontinued. Along in the fall the destruction was resumed, and when the report was sent out the mystery remained unsolved. Flocks have been watched carefully at night, and no one has seen anything of the killer pack. In England dogs are quite carefully checked up, and even in the moorland districts there are not known to be any wild dogs at large.