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TUESDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 21, 1932

MECHANICAL STANDARDIZATION.

Experts in many of the leading industries are devoting their best effort to the work of simplifying industrial processes through better standardization. The waste due to lack of standardization is found to be appalling. Many different types of machines are employed to perform the work which any one of them would perform equally well.

One day last summer a man drove into Grand Forks in a heavy car which is not carried in stock in Grand Forks, and for which no supply of extras is carried here. A shackle bolt in one of his springs was broken. He started out to get another one. He found plenty of bolts of approximately the same size and shape as the one he desired, plenty which would carry the weight and perform the service to be performed, but not one of them would fit. He was obliged to improvise a repair with a blacksmith's bolt of soft iron and wire 300 miles for the particular bolt which he wanted.

It is not to be expected that all machines, whether automobiles or anything else, shall be made alike. There are certain individualities of design which have their peculiar points of excellence, and which satisfy individual tastes. But there is no good reason why, when a bolt of given size and general form is suitable for use on all cars of given weight and general construction, there should not be made a standard bolt, and standard place to put that bolt, for all of them.

The contrary policy applies, not only to bolts, but to most of the parts of an automobile, and of many other machines. The result is that there is tied up an enormous sum in special designs of bolts, screws, and odds and ends, a complete outfit for each make of machine, and the man who uses the machine, whatever it may be, must pay for the waste, in addition to being put to untold inconvenience through not being able to make proper repairs on short notice.

REMARKABLE OVERSIGHT.

If the railroad business is as profitable as many people would have us suppose, there are several million people who have been overlooking a glorious opportunity in not going into the railroad business. The objector may say that it takes money to build a railroad, and the average individual has not much money to invest. It is true that the railroad business cannot be carried on without money—a fact that seems quite frequently to be overlooked. But it doesn't take much money to get into the railroad business. The thing can be done for about ten dollars, if that is all that one has to spare.

The possessor of one of these shares is in the railroad business, and the stock which he owns will participate in all dividends on an equal basis with the stock of any other owner. Such purchases have been possible all the time. Yet millions of dollars have been deposited in savings banks at 4 to 5 per cent, or had been loaned on farm mortgages at rates which yield the loaner 6 to 7 per cent net.

If the railroad business yields such fabulous returns, why is it that so many people who have had money to invest, and who are very familiar with business, have been investing all these years, and are still investing, in things which yield only such very moderate returns?

FERTILITY FROM THE AIR.

It is only recently that men have made much progress in the work of obtaining the elements of soil fertility directly from the air by artificial means. Nature has been conducting her own processes for this purpose ever since the world took form. One of the elements indispensable to plant growth is nitrogen. That substance is a gas which forms about 80 per cent of the air which surrounds the earth. It is collected from the air by the leaves of plants, and some plants have root systems which are capable of collecting an excess of nitrogen and depositing it in the soil where it will be available for other plants.

In the production of food crops large quantities of nitrogen are removed permanently from the soil. The supply is diminished faster than nature carries the work of restoration. It follows that unless the soil is replenished from some source the soil ultimately becomes sterile. It is to prevent this that fertilizers are used.

haustibility of the supply. If the deposits of nitrates are drawn upon indefinitely they must become exhausted in time, no matter how great they are. Some means must be found of restoring to the soil the nitrates which are being carried out to sea or dissipated into the air, otherwise the world must starve.

The sea and the air may be considered inexhaustive storehouses of nitrates. The sea yields up some portion of its treasures in the form of the sea foods which are used by man, and in the seaweed which, in some localities, supplies large quantities of fertilizer. It is quite probable that a much wider use will be found of the multitude of sea growths that are not used. It may be, too, that methods will be found of extracting nitrogen directly from sea water on a commercial basis, though the prospects in this direction are remote.

The air itself has been regarded as the most promising field for exploration, and the extraction of nitrogen directly from it has been developed into an important industry. Two processes are used, the electrical process, which can be used to advantage only where there is abundant waterpower which is not in demand for other purposes, and the cyanamid process, which uses power more economically. The former is used in Norway, the latter being preferred elsewhere.

By the extraction of nitrogen from the air use is made of a supply which can never be exhausted. The gas, in its several combinations, is not only essential in agriculture, but is indispensable in the other industries. It is the chief element in explosives, and in one form or other it enters into practically all of our industrial work.

NOTHING TO REPORT.

In response to the senate resolution introduced by Senator Hitchcock asking for information concerning the negotiation of the four-power treaty, President Harding replies in substance that there is nothing to report. In a letter to the senate the president says that most of the negotiations were conducted without maintaining a record and, further, he holds that it would be incompatible with the public interest to disclose the confidential negotiations of the men who framed the treaties.

All this is not surprising. No other answer could have been expected. It is improbable that any other answer was expected. Nevertheless, we shall now hear from time to time mention of the "star chamber" sessions at which treaties involving the fate of nations were negotiated in the dark of the moon. Thus, we shall be told, have the rights of the American people been bartered away.

Two men appointed to act in a representative capacity to bring about a real settlement of issues which are involved and complicated do not carry on their conversations on the street corner. If they are to get right down to the root of the matter they must get down to a basis where each can understand the other and where both may have an understanding, not only of the proposals which are made, but of the conditions lying back of those proposals, why particular proposals are made, and what is expected to be accomplished by them. They must speak to each other in terms of confidence. They must express themselves frankly on topics the public discussion of which would create difficulties rather than remove them. And when the conversations of that character are over it is a matter of decency and honor that they be treated as a closed book.

The world has known what was done at the arms conference. At the outset it was placed in possession of the details of the naval proposals presented by Secretary Hughes. It has been informed of the several steps in the negotiations as those steps have been taken. It has before it the finished work of the conference, with information as to the principles and policies underlying its main features. It does not know how far Premier Briand may have taken Mr. Hughes into his confidence on the question of French politics which may have been involved in the negotiations, nor whether at any time Mr. Briand may have shaken his finger at the Japanese representative. The public does not know these things nor can it, with propriety, be informed of them, at least not in any contemporary discussion.

ACT SANELY AND KEEP CHEERFUL.

From practically all over the country comes information that many people are ill with a malady whose symptoms resemble those of the "flu" with which we became unpleasantly familiar a few years ago. The general symptoms, as all remember, are generally similar to those of a "hard cold." Scientific people tell us that there is no such thing as a cold, as that term has commonly been understood. The trouble may, and very often does, follow a chill which may have been caused by undue exposure, or it may follow exhaustion or anything else that disturbs the system, impairs vitality and lowers resistance. The microscopic organisms which produce disease often gain foothold and work havoc in bodies which are in all respects in normal condition. But those whose vitality has been lowered, fall victims more quickly and easily.

One trouble with maladies of the "cold" class is that usually before the victim realizes it he has already been affected for hours or days. It is too late to dodge or erect barriers. The enemy is already within the gates. The problem then is to keep the patient as comfortable as possible, to guard against complications and give the body the best possible chance to get rid of the invader. Usually a few days suffices for this. Then it must be remembered that while the organs are functioning they are doing so weakly and uncertainly. The stomach is in no condition to stand heavy doses of hearty food. The lungs may treat with indifference those little beasts that develop pneumonia. The heart lacks its accustomed vigor, and if called on to pump blood enough to provide for an exertion which under ordinary circumstances would be trivial, it may quit beating altogether.

There are plenty of people who have kept going through quite severe attacks of these "cold" diseases. Most of us have done it at times. But graves have been made for an immense number who have tried it and failed. It would be folly to suggest that every little ache and pain demands instant and heroic treatment. If we were to examine our sensations with that end in view any of us could doubtless find plausible excuse for going to bed and letting somebody else do the work. But there is an element of reason to be observed in all things. And the reasonable course seems to be to observe the very plain warnings which nature usually gives when something serious is the matter.

The experience of millions of people has demonstrated that the typical signs of a "hard cold," high temperature alternating with chills, severe headache, aching bones and muscles, and all the rest of it, indicate the presence of something which it does not pay to trifle with. The physician may administer medicine or he may not according to the peculiar conditions, but his treatment invariably includes items which may be supplied by the patient and his attendants—proper attention to bowels and kidneys, absolute rest in bed until recovery is well under way, abstention from all but the lightest foods, liberal consumption of water, and the maintenance of as great a degree of cheerfulness as is possible.

AIN'T IT A GRAND AND GLORIOUS FEELING? - BY BRIGGS



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THE MYSTERY OF THE SILVER DAGGER

BY RANDALL PARRISH

SYNOPSIS.

In a New York jewelry store Philip Severn, United States consular agent, purchases a small watch which attracts him. He purchases it. Later he discovers in a secret compartment a writing giving a clue to a revolutionary movement in this country seeking to overthrow the Chilean government. The writing mentions a woman in the place is met by a man, seemingly by appointment. Severn's suspicions aroused, follows them. They go to the designated place, an abandoned factory. There a man, Philip Severn is accepted as one of the conspirators and admitted. He meets a woman in a bank in which he is working. The stranger addresses Severn as Harry Daly. The incident plays into Severn's hands and he accepts it. His new acquaintance is a notorious thief, "Gentleman George" Harris. Concealed, Severn has the girl he had followed address the conspirators. She urges them to hasten the work of revolution.

CHAPTER IV.—Continued.

The door opened toward me, but it would be suicidal to attempt viewing the room beyond through that opening. The only thing I dare venture was to gain such survey as was possible by means of the narrow crack below the hinge on which the door swung. This afforded me the merest glimpse of one side of the room, revealing four or five men sitting motionless on a bench against the wall, evidently listening intently to what was being said above. Above the exception of Wine, who was third in the row, no face I saw was in the least familiar—two being pronouncedly Spanish, the others not easily recognized as to nationality. I had no difficulty whatever in overhearing their voices, and grasping the sense of what they were saying. As a general thing the words were in English, although occasionally some one requested an explanation in Spanish, which was immediately given. However, the first sentence overheard convinced me that I had drifted too late to learn directly the nature of those instructions received from Washington. "Alva was asking a question."

CHAPTER V.

A Strange Appointment.

I must have failed to grasp the full meaning of what she said, or else it slipped away from me, for the information would be made through this particular door. At least she had pushed it wide open before I realized the need of great haste. I was hemmed in behind the barrier, fortunate, of course, hidden from the eyes of those in the larger apartment. Some one—Alva, no doubt, from his words and voice—had been here as she entered, and indeed, it might have been his hand that swung the door back against me. I stood there startled, unable to breathe, afraid that my very breathing might be overheard.

CHAPTER VI.

THE REASON IS VALPARAISO.

"The reason is Valparaiso, of course," she said; "it is not Washington at all. When you strike, the people must be ready there. You say you are prepared, senator. That is what I was sent to learn, and I find you are not prepared. We are organized and sworn to service."

She seemed to lean forward, her voice changing almost to a whisper. "I see that, your eagerness, your devotion. But that is not readiness for such a duty. Who has been chosen for the act itself—the post of danger? No. Until he has been chosen, he cannot do it. We can accomplish nothing. You have taken no ballot. If the signal word was flashed tonight, 'Go,' and it may be, who among you is authorized to execute the order?"

"Not I," she said. "The money from England yet lies untouched. Surely some instructions were clear, and nothing is being accomplished for the cause while it rests in the vault. It will require all of thirty days to distribute this into the proper hands, here and in Chile, yet nothing has been done. We supposed it was already in circulation. What caused the delay?"

"True," she admitted soberly. "Do you mind gratifying the curiosity of a woman as to what his real name might be?"

"I could not, if I so desired. Ever since I knew him he has been called Harris. That is all I can say."

"You won't answer that. That may be ignorance or it may be pretense. Never mind. I recognize your face now. You were the man calling in the saloon on my way out here. Were you waiting for this woman—Miss Harris—then?"

"We met later."

"Did I merely dream that you appeared somewhat interested in me at the time, or was it true?"

"You did interest me. You didn't appear the sort to be making a rendezvous out of a saloon, however respectable might be the proprietor. I had volunteered the information that you were his niece."

"Did he, indeed? That was very nice of him, wasn't it? Rather odd, is it not, that you should drop in here, and find me again. What do you think of me now?"

I looked at her for a moment before I answered, unable to frame my words to any satisfaction. What, did she mean? What exactly was she driving at? Her whole manner puzzled me exceedingly. Was she prying me for a fool? Was she attempting to lead me on for some secret purpose of her own? Did she believe my explanation; and, if not, why did she fall to throw open that door and denounce me at once as a spy? There, in that soft light, she appeared more attractive than ever, and so peculiarly womanly, as I have seen women of that type in this scene of plot and crime. It was a young face, bright, animated, which fronted me, the dark eyes smiling and unafraid, gazing straight into mine, with a challenge to which I could not very attitude pliqued me, aroused me to defense. I desired to hold her respect, her interest; nothing she might say or do would lower in my estimation to the hideous level of a political conspirator. Yet what else could she be? How could I account for her presence in this place on any other theory except that she came as a representative of Chilean intrigue?

As the trusted messenger of that secret conspiracy at Santiago, under orders of the revolutionaries, I had heard her words spoken boldly to this band of plotters, words of authority—demanded that the very soul of the nation be placed at once as a spy? There, in that soft light, she appeared more attractive than ever, and so peculiarly womanly, as I have seen women of that type in this scene of plot and crime. It was a young face, bright, animated, which fronted me, the dark eyes smiling and unafraid, gazing straight into mine, with a challenge to which I could not very attitude pliqued me, aroused me to defense. I desired to hold her respect, her interest; nothing she might say or do would lower in my estimation to the hideous level of a political conspirator. Yet what else could she be? How could I account for her presence in this place on any other theory except that she came as a representative of Chilean intrigue?

"Frankly, I do not know what to think," I answered last. "Your mission here tonight, as I understand it, somehow does not fit in with my natural conception of you as a woman."

"She laughed, but so softly as to be inaudible to those beyond the closed door."

"You amuse me. Cannot a woman—even a womanly woman, if you please—love her country and be willing to sacrifice in its behalf?"

"Not to the extent of treachery and deceit; not to the end that innocent men and women suffer. I returned home, forgetting caution."

"And is that my purpose here, you think?"

"What is good—yet do not trust too much in any woman. What is your name?"

"Daly, Harry Daly."

"You find the sporting section here and the news section there and the magazine section some place else."

"OH-H-H BOY! AIN'T IT A GRAND AND GLORIOUS FEELING!"

(WELL—NO—WE CAN'T SAY THAT IT IS)

"Do not mistake the number. Ask for Miss Conrad. Now go back there and wait for Horner. Quick—they are coming."

I plunged hastily into the passage and groped my way back between the narrow walls to the secluded room in the rear. I was too confused, too startled, to even think clearly. My conception of this woman, her name, and her purpose, had been changed a dozen times during this brief conversation. Even now I was utterly in the dark. Did the woman know me, or suspect the reason of my presence? That was manifestly impossible. She was utterly strange to me, and she was not one to be easily forgotten. Why, then, did she trust me—if it was trust?

It must be either that, or treachery of the foulest type. "247 Le Compte street," I recalled the neighborhood, only a vague conception of red brick buildings of exactly the same general style—probably fairly respectable, boarding houses. And I was to go to "Miss Conrad," who might she be? Not the lady I had just left, surely, for she was scheduled to take the midnight train for Washington. "Miss Conrad" might be anything—a strange woman, an accomplice, even a disguised policeman. It masked some trick surely, of which I was quite liable to be the victim; behind my lady's smiling eyes, and carelessness, there was surely some narrow purpose. This was the impression with which I ended—that for some and unknown reason she was coldly playing with me, leading me on.

I began to think Harris had gone away with the others and left me alone. I heard voices speaking earnestly or excitedly in the distance, venturing forth from my hiding place. Then he appeared suddenly, bringing in his arms a bottle, and a box of cigars.

"Touch a match to the gas jet, Daly," he said, feeling for the table in the dark. "That's better. I hung around until the gang all got out, so as to be sure the coast was clear. Have a drink, and light up, old man. We are as secure here as we would be at the bottom of the sea. This is a fine whisky, but good—I sampled it before."

He sat on the table, nursing his knee, rather pleased with himself. I thought, a clear thrust between his eyes and mine, and he smiled at me. His face, I ignored the invitation to drink, but helped myself to a weed, waiting for him to open conversation.

THE HERALD MAIL BAG

APPEALS FOR CLOTHING.

Editor Herald—There are still clothing appeals for discarded clothing from drought sufferers in the western part of North Dakota and Western South Dakota.

In a letter just received, a father writes: "We must have clothing and flour, as I am simply up against it. I have no means by which to support my family and no chance to earn. If you can help me, I will be glad to have my children in school. Five crop failures in succession."

Another sorry tried father writes: "Have you any more discarded clothing, shoes or hat clothes? Don't forget this territory; we certainly need help, and I shall be glad to distribute to others if I receive more than I can use."

Another writes: "Can you send us some discarded clothing? We are 12 in the family and have had no crop for four years—not even feed back last year."

Another letter just received says: "Have had practically no crop for four years, none whatever last year. We are 12 in the family, and have no money with which to buy. Glad to get anything you can send. Had hoped to avoid making another appeal, but in the light of such losses we must not discriminate. Doing what we can do to relieve such pressing want, especially as discarded clothing and shoes are in such short supply, is a noble measure."

Some 500 shipments have been routed through this office, but the appeals are still numerous than ever—three today.

Revenge is an act of passion. Head Went Ads After Results.