

RETURN OF NORMALCY PREDICTED BY HAYS; HARDING IS FACTOR

That the nation is headed toward an early return of normalcy and that the senate will do much toward speeding the return, is the opinion of Postmaster General Will Hays, as recently expressed in a speech in Cleveland, O.

"In its more obvious sense," said Mr. Hays, "normalcy is a condition which can be expressed in concrete facts and figures. But in a larger and more important sense, though a more subtle one, normalcy is a psychological condition. It is a state of mind. At any time and under any presidency, the state of mind of the country is largely influenced by the state of mind of the man in the White House.

Personality Reflected.

"Placed in so high and so conspicuous a station, emanations from his personality radiate throughout the country, and affect or create the state of mind of the country. The White House is, indeed, the 'biggest pulpit in the country.'

"In this present time the operation of one of those higher laws that work for the world's good has brought to the White House exactly the personality that was needed to lead the country away from the turbulent passions of war back to the normal human nature of peace."

"If you, throughout the country, have been able to 'sense' the curing and restorative qualities of President Harding's personality, much more vividly do we, who serve in contact with him, appreciate him as one whose greatest concern is justice and good faith, who cures excitement with serenity, who meets passion with gentleness, who conquers anger with tolerance, who overcomes violence with patience, who shames greed with unselfishness, whose test for every decision is: 'What does good faith call on us to do?' whose approach to every problem is: 'Which of these alternatives is just?'

Taxation Important.

The matter of taxation, the postmaster general declared, is the most important one thing in process of adjustment.

"The country has been confronted with an almost insurmountable difficulty," he said. "War debts must be paid of course, and shall be paid. They are paid with moneys which must be raised. Taxes which kill initiative must and will be repealed and steps are being taken as rapidly as possible to that end.

It is the idea of those carrying the largest responsibility that for the immediate present the method of raising revenue can probably not be fundamentally changed, but that there shall be a readjustment of that method providing new and lower rates, with the repeal of abortive features, such as the excess profits tax.

Must Repeal Income Tax.

"Personally, I am willing to say most emphatically that this country cannot go on, indefinitely during peace time with either the form or the degree of taxation which was originally devised to meet the emergency of war. Our colossal income taxes were adopted with an eye single to one thing, namely, raising money in the largest quantity and with the greatest speed. We took the device of going straight where the money was and taking it ruthlessly.

"Our present system of taxation destroys the incentive to save. The time is too short and the government's need of money too great to turn around immediately, but express the hope and expectation that soon we shall be able to change our system of taxation so as to raise less of our revenue through burdensome income taxes and more of it through some other form of direct tax on the production or consumption of goods."

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The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle

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"When you see a man with whiskers of that cut and the 'pink 'un' protruding out of his pocket, you can always draw him by a bet," said he. "I dare say that if I had put £100 down in front of him, that man would not have given me such complete information as was drawn from him by the idea that he was doing me on a wager. Well, Watson, we are, I fancy, nearing the end of our quest, and the only point which remains to be determined is whether we should go on to this Mrs. Oakshott tonight, or whether we should reserve it for tomorrow. It is clear from what that surly fellow said there are others besides ourselves who are anxious about the matter, and I should—"

The man hesitated for an instant. "My name is John Robinson," he answered with a sidelong glance.

"No, no; the real name," said Holmes, sweetly. "It is always awkward doing business with an alias. A flush sprang to the white cheek of the stranger. "Well, then," said he, "my real name is James Ryder."

"Precisely so. Head attendant at the 'Hotel Cosmopolitan.' Pray step into the cab, and I shall soon be able to tell you everything you wish to know."

The little man stood glancing from one to the other of us with half-frightened, half-hopeful eyes, as one who is not sure whether he is on the verge of windfall or a catastrophe. Then we stepped into the cab and in half an hour we were back in the sitting room at Baker street. Nothing had been said during our ride, but the high thin breathing of our companion, and the clasplings and unclasplings of his hands, spoke of the nervous tension within him.

"Here we are!" said Holmes, cheerfully, as we filed into the room. "The fire looks very seasonable in this weather. You look cold, Mr. Ryder. Pray take the basket chair. I will just put on my slippers before we settle this little matter of yours. Now, then! You want to know what became of those geese?"

"Yes, sir."

"Or, rather, I fancy, of that goose. It was one bird, I imagine, in which you were interested—white, with a black bar across the tail."

Ryder quivered with emotion. "Oh, sir," he cried, "can you tell me where it went to?"

"It came here."

"Here?"

"Yes, and a most remarkable bird it proved. I don't wonder that you should take an interest in it. It laid an egg after it was dead—the bonniest, brightest little blue egg that ever was seen. I have it here in my museum."

Our visitor staggered to his feet and clutched the mantel piece with his right hand. Holmes unlocked his strong-box and held out the blue carbuncle, which shone out like a star, with a cold, brilliant, many-pointed radiance. Ryder stood glaring with a

"Excuse me, I know everything of it. You are endeavoring to trace some geese which were sold by Mrs.

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drawn face, uncertain whether to claim or disown it.

"The game's up, Ryder," said Holmes, quietly. "Hold up, man, or you will be into the fire! Give him an arm back into his chair. Watson. He's not got blood enough to go to prison with impunity. Give him a dash of brandy. So! Now he looks a little more human. What a shrimp it is to be sure!"

For a moment he had staggered and nearly fallen, but the brandy brought a tinge of color into his cheeks, and he sat staring with frightened eyes at his accuser.

"I have almost every link in my hands, and all the proofs which I could possibly need, so there is little which you need tell me. Still that little may as well be cleared up to make the case complete. You had heard, Ryder, of this blue stone of the Countess of Morcar's?"

"It was Catherine Cusack who told me of it," said he, in a crackling voice. "I see her ladyship's waiting maid. Well, the temptation of sudden wealth so easily acquired was too much for you, as it has been for better men before you; you were not very scrupulous in the means you used. It seems to me, Ryder, that there is the making of a very petty villain in you. You know that this man Horner, the plumber, had been concerned in some such matter before, and that suspicion would rest the more readily upon him. What do you do, then? You made some small job in my lady's room— you and your confederate Cusack—and you managed that he should be the man sent for. Then, when he had left, you rifled the jewel-case, raised the alarm and had this unfortunate man arrested. You then—"

Ryder threw himself down suddenly upon the rug and clutched at my companion's knees. "For God's sake, have

(Concluded Tomorrow.)

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