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APRIL 20, 1920.

AMERICAN GENIUS LEADS.

In a recent address in London, Sir George Paish related with considerable pride that British merchant ships had made great progress in the substitution of fuel oil for coal. Although he did not state so directly, the manner in which he presented the facts left the inference that the use of oil as a fuel on ships was a movement in which British ship owners had taken the initiative. As a matter of fact the use of fuel oil has made greatest progress on American ships, a Pacific steamship company having been the pioneer.

INLAND LINERS.

Ports on the Great Lakes and on the Mississippi and its navigable tributaries are at last attaining the dignity of foreign seaports.

American genius has taken the lead in shipping almost ever since the colonies were established. The schooner was an American invention, as also was the clipper, which for many years was the most efficient merchant vessel. Because of the repeal of favorable legislation, the American merchant marine was given a setback about the time the manufacture of steel ships began, and Great Britain, as a result, rapidly took the lead. Given equality of opportunity so far as governmental policies are concerned, American ship builders and American ship operators will undoubtedly take care of themselves.

The substitution of oil for coal as a fuel for ships will mean increased efficiency so far as speed is concerned, increased carrying capacity due to the saving of fuel space, decreased expenditure for wages, and a more attractive means of employment for American labor. The American workmen who refuse to go down into the hold of a ship to shovel coal will have no objection to operating the burners of a ship using oil as fuel. Great Britain was not slow in adopting the fuel oil policy of American ship owners. America's principal task now is to place America's shipping on an equality with the shipping of Great Britain, Japan and other nations.

SIGNALING TO MARS.

The planet Mars makes one of its nearest approaches to the earth this month, when the distance between us will be about 55,000,000 miles. Taking advantage of this reduction of the intervening space, a college professor has figured it out that by ascending a balloon to a height of 50,000 feet the dwellers on Mars, if there be any, will notice his signals from the balloon, and act accordingly.

ADIEU! SALT HORSE!

Judging by what the professor is quoted as saying, he takes himself seriously in taking this venture so far overhead that it will require a powerful telescope to see him—if he means what he says and tries to ascend to the height he has in his mind. To the average individual, however, the ordinary person who relies chiefly upon common sense, the professor's project is simply ridiculous. Comparing 50,000 feet with 55,000,000 miles, the ordinary person thinks the professor might as well send his signals from the surface of the earth, or even from the bottom of a well, where, it is said, a good view of stars can be obtained even in the middle of the day.

But we have enough troubles of our own. In the rather fervid circumstances which keep us grappling we should seek no messages from a planetary neighbor whose name shrieks of war. Ordinary politeness, moreover, should suggest we hesitate until we can feel assured whether the Martians, possibly observing a confusing of earthly conditions which seems to be disconcerting, if not disheartening, are perturbed by any desire whatever to recognize or communicate with us.

THE POOR OLD WORLD.

The proneness of some individuals to interpret every "mysterious sign" as forecasting the end of the world is shown again by a woman in Michigan and a number of her neighbors. The woman in question claims that one of her hens laid an egg on which was the inscription: "The End Will Come After Five Days." Instantly it was assumed by the owner of the hen that the latter was giving warning that the end of the world was at hand.

While it is contended by some that the inscription looks to be the work of some joker clever with a knife, suppose that the egg were so marked when laid. Why jump to the conclusion that the inscription, if it means anything, refers to the world? Think of the countless other things to which it might refer! Why was it not assumed that the message had something to do with the hen herself? Maybe, disgusted with her inability to bring down the high cost of living by industrious laying she has made up her mind to lay off work and let things go to the how-wows, if nothing else will do. Again, the inscription might forecast the blowing up of another campaign boom. Indeed, this puzzle of the egg is as nothing to the perplexities given to some of the politicians by the Michigan primaries.

It all recalls the "mysterious letters" a farm laborer claimed to have seen one hot summer day. He reported to his employer that "G. P. C." had risen suddenly before him. His interpretation was "Go French Christ." But his employer ruled that it meant nothing of the kind. "Go plow corn" was his version, and he sent the hired man scurrying to obey the

sign. So let the Michigan woman read something sensible into the inscription that is bothering her.

IF CITIES HAD THE MONEY.

A newspaper that asked the heads of several cities what they would do if they had the money received a set of replies that are illuminating as regards municipal aspirations.

One mayor wrote: "We'd pave and repave city streets, construct sewers, build bridges and schools, install a new fire-alarm system, eliminate grade crossings, provide better collection of garbage and rubbish, increase the pay of city employees and school teachers, construct a new city hall, provide better bathing places, build driveways along the river, establish several public comfort stations and buy land that can be bought cheaply now for future parks and playgrounds."

Most of the other mayors presented less comprehensive programs. Nearly all of them, however, agreed in wanting more and better homes, schools, paving, water supply and parks, and agreed that if they were out of debt, the first thing they would do would be to get into debt again for these purposes.

A city, like a family, can always find imperative uses for its money. And it is well to look ahead in this way and decide what money ought to be spent, even when it is not available. Sooner or later, the dreams will be realized, if plans are clearly conceived and kept well in mind.

It may also be said, despite small-minded ideas of "extravagance," that there is little possibility of a city spending too much money on itself, if the money is spent for the important things, and the authorities see that every dollar buys a dollar's worth of improvement. For the community, as for the family, wise and farsighted spending is more profitable than parsimony.

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The Tower of Babel

By BILL ARMSTRONG



A—whistlin' soft and walkin' wide. I says one day to Hi, says I, "How do you always keep 'em, Hi?" He gives his bait another swish in An' chucklin', says, "I jest keep fishin'."

Hi took to reading law at night An' pretty soon, the first he knew. He had a lawsuit, won his fight. An' was a lawyer! I'll be blowed! He knew more law than Squire McKnab!

An' tho' he had no gift of gab

To brag about, somehow he made

A sober sort of talk that played;

The minister with the other side,

One day when someone asked if

Hi'd

Explain how he got in condishin'

He laughed an' said, "I jest kept fishin'!"

Well, Hi is Gō'nor Somers now,

A big man 'round the state, you bet!

To me the same old Hi somehow,

The same old champion fisher yet!

It wasn't so much the bait er pole,

It wasn't so much the fishin' hole,

That won for Hi his big success;

'Twas jest his fishin' on, I guess.

A cheerful, stiddy, hopeful kind

Of keepin' at it—don't you mind?

That's what of us would jest keep fishin'!

Hi Johnson is out with the an-

nouncement that he will not be

"the hitching post" in the coming

republican convention, meaning he

will accept the presidential nomi-

nation or nothing. Our view of Hi is,

that he will be durned lucky if he

gets into the livery stable at all.

HI KEPT FISHIN'.

Hi Somers was the durndest cuss

For ketchin' fish—he sure was

A great fisherman

He never used to make no fuss

About the kind of pole he'd suit;

Er weather, neither; he'd just say,

'I got to ketch a mess today.'

An' toward the creek you'd see him

tended the royal ladies who bore

this name, while the Jeeses, the

masculine counterparts, have had more

suspicious careers. Twice, a Giovanna

or Jessie, reigned in Naples

as Empress and Empress, and her

Spanish counterpart, Juana la Loca

of Castile, went through a royal

seige of melancholy madness.

Two heroines were so called:

Jeanne of Flanders, or Jannekje

Flam, as the Bretons called her,

and the heroine of Henbonne, and

the much more noble Jeanne la

Pucelle of Orleans. Two saints gave

the name to their counterparts, a pair

of saints—Jeanne de Valois,

daughter of Louis XII and discarded

wife of Louis de Chastel, the disciple of St.

Francis de Sales.

Whether Shakespeare's lovely

heroine of "The Merchant of Venice"

was an improvement upon Jessie

as short as Jessie was real,

the remains of Jessie, the father of David, is open to conjecture. How

ever it may be, Jessie signifies

"grace of the Lord."

Her talismanic gem is the amethyst

which preserves its wearer from

contagion and protects soldiers from

harm in battle. It has a sobering

effect upon one of light or frivolous

mind. She is Jessie's lucky number. The

promise is her flower.

Jessie has always been a favorite

name with the poets, especially the

Scotch poets. Robert Burns contributed one of the most charming

of lyrics written to her:

'O fresh is the rose in the gay

dewy morning,

And sweet is the lily at evening

close.

But fair is the fair presence o' lovely