Homecoming

By Helen Trevelyan

The little old lady stood on the outskirts of the great, roaring station, hesitant and confused. The hurrying crowds and the noise left her flustered after the peace and quiet of her village. She paused and looked anxiously around.

A kindly porter, spotting the frail figure, with its wisps of grey hair under an old-fashioned bonnet, darting helplessly to and fro, went quickly to her assistance.

"Want a train, missus?" he asked.

"Oh!"

She turned a startled, grateful look upon him. "Oh, thank you—no. That is, well—yes, you see, my son is coming from Scotland and I do not know where to meet him and——"

He beamed. "That's all right," he assured her. "Come on. Follow me."

She obeyed willingly.

Across the vast expanse of station they went—the long swinging strides of the kindly porter, and the small, tripping steps of the little old lady. She was so thankful to have him there helping her, making a way through the pushing, purposeful throng, which every now and then threatened to overwhelm her. At la t he came to a standstill and steered her to the back of a slowly surging queue.

"There, you'll be all right, now," he beamed again, and hurried off, leaving her to nod her mute thanks.

Men, women and children pressed forward, and she clung grimly to the imitation moleskin coat just in front of her.

Thep neared the barrier. "When is it due? When is it due?" nearly every other person inquired of the tired man standing there, and hardly listening to his reply: "In three or four minutes." He kept repeating it wearily.

Poor thing, thought the little old lady, the train's coming means nothing to him beyond so many more hundred tickets and passes to be clipped, collected, and checked. And she made a point of not asking what time the express was due, although her heart beat furiously and she longed to hear his cold, reassuring "In three or four minutes."

Once on the platform she let the crowd pass and leave her a little behind, for that was how she always liked it to be in the great important moments of her life—a little apart, a little separate.

And for this moment she had lived, and fought to live, for three long, aching years.

Without a word from Mike, and only her stern belief in him, her implicit faith to keep the fire of courage burning bright throughout. While people pestered her with searching questions, hinted at hidden truths, and even suggested having heard of him being seen in bad company. And above it all her faith had triumphed, and today that triumph would find its realization. The home was waiting, and she was ready. No matter what had held him silent and away from her, the future would bring recompense to both of them.

The signal dropped.

And the little old lady's eyes filled with tears.

It was ridiculous, she told herself, to shed tears for happiness and never be able to cry for unhappiness. But she couldn't help it. She reflected. The tears always seemed to crystalize with sorrow and flow with joy.

The thundering majesty of the magnificent express was blurred to her; only the music of it rang clearly in her ears. She rocked a little on neat, black-booted feet as the waiting crowds intermingled with the eager arrivals, rushed together and were lost in those curiously thrilling moments of meeting and being met; and she dabbed quickly at her eyes with a large white pocket handkerchief. Because whatever happened, she must not disgrace Mike.

And there he was——

"Oh!"

There were no words, no time or place for words, only a fierce hug to say everything for them. After a brief moment they fell apart and stood gazing into each other's faces. And suddenly she saw the other man standing so close behind him. Her look passed to Mike and then back again, inquiringly.

"Ah, yes, mother, I must explain everything."

She remembered afterwards thinking how different those first words were from what she had planned and hoped.

"Look!"

And with his left hand he opened his coat and showed her the warrant book of a detective.

"Why, Mike——?" And then her eyes travelled to his right, imprisoned arm, and she saw the handcuffs on the wrist. "Why, Mike——?" It was almost a whisper.

"That's all right, mother," he blustered, laughing. "Don't look so scared," and he put his free arm round her thin shoulders. "It's my job, see? That's why you haven't heard from me for so long. I've been up and down the country—all over the place — after — after, well, criminals and such—and I tracked this one down in Scotland, and knowing I'd have to bring him through London on the way to prison, I couldn't resist sending you a wire to be here—so that I could see you—if only for five minutes. Just while we changed trains—our next is due any second now over there," and he pointed to the opposite side of the platform.

There was a pause. And suddenly, almost diffidently, the little old lady put out her hand and laid it gently on the other man's rough sleeve.

"Never mind," she said, softly. "Your mother will be waiting for you, always—I know.' And then, as though remembering something, she turned swiftly to her son.

"But Mike, does that mean you're going away again?"

He nodded.

"Oh, but for how long, dear boy? I can't bear——"

Abruptly she pulled herself together, and asked quietly: "For how long, Mike?"

"Not long, mother—a year or so, perhaps. I know, I'm sorry.' He saw thes agony of dismay in her face and it was like a knife thrust in his heart. "You see, I've got to finish my—my job, mother."

"Yes, yes, dear, of course."

She had complete control of herself by then, and was entirely mistress of the situation. And both men marvelled at her courage.

"Well, there—that will be your train in now. Perhaps you had better be taking your places."

She did not attempt to follow them, nor did they suggest it.

Neither did mother nor son take even a parting kiss of farewell touch of one another. It had always been that way. Otherwise they could never have borne it.

The guard waved his flag and blew his whistle, and she stood waving the large pocket handkerchief until the train became a distant curl of smoke. She could not cry, because the tears had turned to crystal in her eyes.

* * *

Very slowly, Mike lowered his left hand from his forehead, and handed the warrant book back to its rightful owner.

"That was great of you," he said.—"Tit-Bits."

Basket Ball Players Cover 2½ Miles

A basketball player travels about two and a half miles during a game—almost a mile less than he thinks he covers.

The actual distance was measured at Depauw University with the aid of a device known as the pursuit-meter, by which every movement of a player could be recorded with considerable accuracy by an observer. The result is announced in the research quarterly of the American Physical Education Association, by Lloyd L. Messehsmith and Stephen M. Corey of the Psychology department.

They found that a player moves more than 11 feet every two minutes. From the first to the last four-minute period of the first half of the game the distance covered falls from 1,561 to 984 feet. The player is never as active again as during the first four minutes. He reaches almost the same level again during the third four-minute period of the second half but finishes the game at a decidedly slackened pace.

Most players estimate that the distance covered in a game would be about three and a half miles.

Singing Waters

One loud and crashing deluge is the sky,
And all the hills are laced with flashing falls,
And loud from strath and glen as we sail by
The voice of water calls—

The voice of singing water; and the deep
Long-buried wellspring that has slept so long
In the dark cavern of my heart, from sleep
Wakens again to song.

—Wilfrid Gibson in the Commonweal.

Britain To Discuss Effect of Movies on Youth

Birmingham, Eng.—The effect of motion pictures upon children is to be discussed at a national conference in Birmingham within the next few months, according to present plans.

Several inquiries of the sort already have been started in English towns, modeled after a study made in Birmingham and explained in the report of the Birmingham Cinema Inquiry Committee.

"It's an awful come down for a man."

"What is?"

"When he's five miles up in the air and his gasoline gives out."

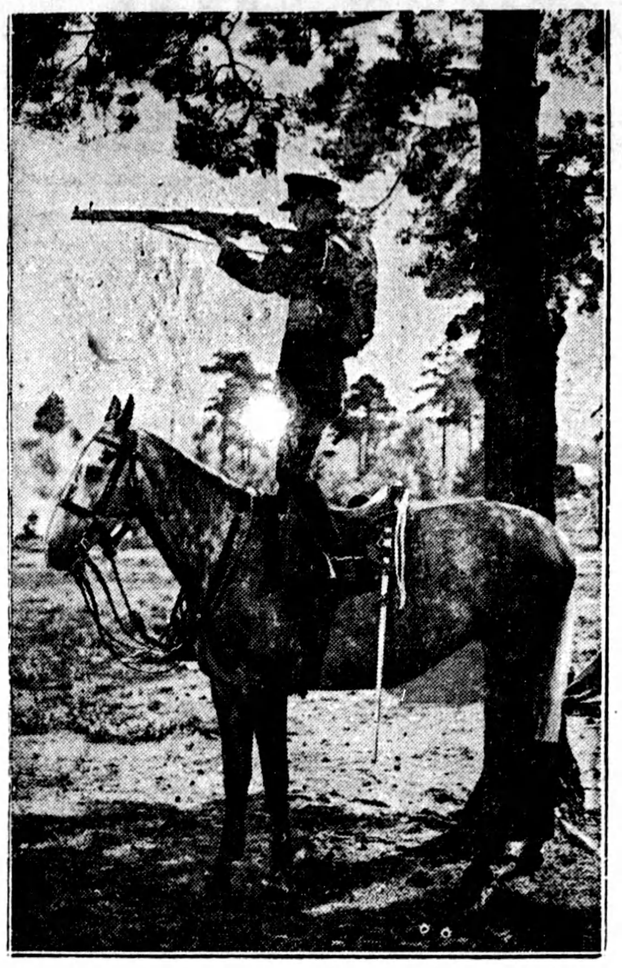
Nature

Those who have obtained the farthest insight into Nature have been in all ages firm believers in God.—Whewell.

Sorrow

Nothing so increases one's reverence for others as a great sorrow to one's self. It teaches one the depth of human nature.—Charles Buxton.

At Aldershot Manoeuvres



A sniper of Greys in action during Aldershot, England, war manoeuvres, recently, in which 15,000 men took part. The largest scale operations since the war.

Prince Edward Island

The Indian name of Prince Edward Island, Canada's island province, is "Epagwit" meaning "resting on the waters" according to the Geographic Board of Canada. The island was known in early times to the French as "Ile St. Jean" and to the English as "St. John's Island." In order to prevent confusion with St. John's, Newfoundland, and Saint John, New Brunswick, an Act was passed in 1780 naming the island "New Ireland," but as the name had already been used, it was disallowed. Eventually in 1798 the island received its present name, after Edward, Duke of Kent, father of Queen Victoria, who was then in command of the troops at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Briefs

A little self examination brings to most of us a verdict of regrets .

Folly brings more lost hopes than it will ever bring fortunes.

The dangers the mind fears most rarely appear to view.

It is not want of thought so much as selfishness makes many forgetful.

From a horny hand of toil comes the richest harvest of content.

There is one thing in the world our foes never envy us—our bodily sufferings.

A meddling mind is more to be feared than unlawful intruders.

Religion

A man's "religion" consists not of the many things he is in doubt of and tries to believe, but of the few things he is assured of, and has no need of effort for believing.—Carlyle.

Bread of Life

The bread of life is love; the salt of life is work; the sweetness of life, poetry; the water of life, faith.

Reason

If we do not reason we are bigots; if we cannot we are fools; if we dare not we are slaves.—Dr. Black.

The Hollow

It is quiet here. Tree shade
Is a cool place. I will rest
Easily in the shadow. I will lie
On the earth's breast,
And look at what sky I can see
Through leaves, or perhaps look
At dandelions bowing gravely
To themselves in the brook.

Not thinking of this thing or that thing,
I will lie
And forget the road I have traveled over
To look at the sky.

Perhaps I shall forget the brown bluff
Over the brook I just climb
As high as the trees are high.
Perhaps I shall forget time
And lie here forever, forgetting
How soon it will be
Before I must leave this hollow
Reluctantly.

—Lynn Riggs, in "The Iron Dish."

Rain is Healthful

Rain has fallen nearly every day for months past in England, but medical authorities say the summer as a result, has been unusually healthy.

Tests made this year in Brighton, Margate, Yarmouth, and the Isle of Man show that the air is charged with ozone to a degree impossible in a hot summer, and a Harley Street specialist has stated that the air of London has probably never been purer.

Geodetic Bench Marks

The method of the Geodetic Survey of Canada, Department of the Interior, of noting the various elevations above sea level throughout the Dominion takes the form of affixing three-inch bronze tablets to suitable permanent walls or bases whenever necessary. By reference to one of these bench marks, as they are called, the elevation above sea level of any part in its vicinity can be ascertained.

8,000 Miles By Canoe

After leaving the land of midnight sun and travelling 8,000 miles by canoe to Nassau, Bahamas, "Eskimo Charlie" (Charlie Piannishek) and his two children arrived at Jacksonville, Fla., having hitch hiked by vessel from Nassau.

THE CAR OWNER'S SCRAP BOOK

By G. W. Donald

Locating Knocks

An instrument for locating knocks can be made from an old telephone receiver and an iron rod. Procure a discarded telephone receiver, remove the magnet and insert an iron rod about two or three feet long. Thread three-quarters of an inch of the end of the rod and screw a small nut all the way down on this end. Then place a piece of round fibre on this end and screw another nut on the end of the rod to hold the fibre securely. The fibre should be of sufficient diameter to hold the rod snugly in place. A fairly heavy brass spring should now be placed on the end of the rod and secured with a nut.

When the fibre and spring have been fastened in place, insert them into the receiver in the position formerly held by the magnet. Cover with tape the hole at the other end of the receiver, where the rod passes through. Next replace the diaphram and earpiece on the receiver and be sure that the diaphram presses firmly against the brass spring.

Now by taking soundings at different parts of the motor with the receiver to the ear and the other end of the rod resting on the motor, the knocks in the motor will be magnified, making it very easy to locate the source of the trouble.

Repairing Cracks in Engines

Small cracks or holes in the water jackets of an engine may be closed by applying a paste composed of glycerine and litharge. Mix to a consistency slightly thinner than putty and work into the opening while the engine is warm and the cooling system is drained. The engine should not be used for a few days, or until the mixture has thoroughly hardened.

For parts which are exposed to intense heat, such as the exhaust manifold, the following mixture should be used: Fine iron filings, 40 parts; flowers of sulphur, 10 parts; sal-ammoniac, 1 part; Portland cement, 20 parts. Then add water to form a fairly heavy paste. After mixing this paste, allow it to stand for a few hours and then apply. In about two days this mixture hardens, forming a substance greatly resembling cast iron.

How to Make a Grease Gun

A very serviceable grease gun can be constructed from an old single cylinder foot pump. The lower end of the pump is sawed off just above the foot piece. Then take a fairly large sized funnel (one that is made of heavy gauge metal) and cut it off just above the spout. Solder the funnel to the bottom of the pump cylinder.

Oil or light transmission grease can be drawn into the gun by putting the end into the oil or grease and pulling on the handle. To fill with heavy grease, unscrew the cap and remove the plunger; fill the gun with grease, then replace the plunger and cap.

Mud Holes

With one wheel in a bad mud hole, the car will usually be as disabled as though both wheels were in the mud, as the action of the differential causes the one wheel to spin. To get out of such a difficulty, proceed as follows: Disconnect the emergency brake rod on the wheel which rests on solid ground. Then pull back the brake lever hard, which will lock the wheel in the mud hole. By letting in the clutch, all the power will be applied to the wheel on solid ground, which will usually drag the other wheel out of the mud hole.

Tuning the Horn

The pitch, or tone, of an electric horn can be raised or lowered at will by the following method. After removing and taking the horn apart, place the diaphram, or disc, from which the sound is produced, on some smooth, hard surface. Then hammer lightly all around the edge of the disc. This raises the tension in the center, which causes a quicker and higher pitched tone. If one desires to lower the pitch, hammer a few light blows in the centre of the disc.

Celluloid Curtain Lights

The best way to clean and renew celluloid curtain lights is first to use clean vinegar, applying it with a soft piece of cheese cloth or gauze. Keep the vinegar away from the curtain material, as it might discolor it. Then, if the lights are scratched they may be renewed by applying acetone varnish, which will restore them almost to their original transparency.

Leaks in the Top

Small leaks in the top of the car can be repaired with the same rubber compound that is used for filling cuts in tire casings. Press the compound securely into the hole and then trim off the excess. Allow it to stand for a few hours and then apply heated flat-irons to both sides, pressing together firmly. The heat of the irons will vulcanize the rubber in place.

Repairing a Spark Plug

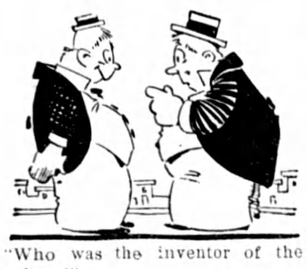
When adjusting the gap of a spark plug, the outer electrode will sometimes break off, rendering the plug useless. But it is not necessary to throw the plug away. Merely bend the center electrode so that it stands close to the outer shell, setting the space to the usual gap space.

When the Engine Stops Suddenly

Sometimes when out on the road, the engine will stop suddenly without apparent cause. It is probably due to one of the following troubles: No gasoline supply. Spark plug broken. Electric circuit disconnected at some point. A broken wire. A loose terminal. Timer trouble.

To Clean the Glass

Try dipping a clean cloth in gasoline and rubbing lightly over the windshield and windows, then polishing with a dry cloth.



"Who was the inventor of the wireless?"

"Don't you know that? Any fool could tell you."

"That's why I asked you."

Many a man has a good memory for faces and a bad memory for debts.

Some men are so self-confident that they are unable to distinguish a cheer from a jeer.

A Discoverer

There is one man known to history, and long illustrous among his fellowmen, who in his own meditations had reached the conviction that there was a new world far across the sea, and no disappointment or vexing delay could expel that conviction from his earnest mind. Neither the frowns nor the neglect of monarchs, neither hope deferred, nor the terrors of the deep, nor mutiny, nor tempest, nor death, could turn Columbus from his resolute purpose. On he pressed in spite of them all—serene amid the tempest—full of hope when all around seemed to tell only of despair; and he stood at last on the shores of a lovely island in the ocean—the discoverer of lands whose discovery has changed the history of the world!—Tweedie.

Picking winners is usually a losing game.

Sun Electrons Cause Blue Sky New Light Experiments Indicate

Cambridge, Mass. — Electrons streaming from the sun may be the cause of our familiar but mysterious blue sky, Dr. Willi M. Cohn, of the University of Berlin, has concluded as the result of his experiments in which a blue light very similar to that from the sky was produced in the laboratory. Dr. Cohn is doing high temperature research at the A. D. Little laboratories and will start researches at Harvard shortly.

Dr. Cohn experimented in Berlin with cathode rays in a high vacuum, formed in a tube similar to the x-ray tube. He allowed the stream of electrons, which is the cathode ray, to meet larger electrically charged particles of matter, known to scientists as ions, which are formed either from a piece of radioactive metal, such as thorium, or from a gas. The blue light appeared where the electrons and the ions came together.

This blue light can be broken up by prisms to form a spectrum or "rainbow" of continuous color, just as is found in sunlight. The blue light from the clear sky also shows a continuous spectrum, although gases, such as the air this light passes through, have quite different spectra, which show only thin colored lines. Dr. Cohn points out that at the upper layers of our atmosphere electrons continually arriving from the sun and ions of the gases which form our air meet in the intense vacuum of space. Since under such conditions in his laboratory the blue light which is so like the light from the blue sky is formal, he believes that the blue of the heavens may, at least partially, have the same cause as that of the laboratory.

Since the time of Newton scientists have speculated on why the sky is blue. The most successful explanation heretofore has been that of Sir John Tyndall and Lord Raleigh in the last century, which considers it due to sunlight broken up in a particular way by spherical particles in the atmosphere. Dr. Cohn states that his theory does not conflict with the older one so far as direct sunlight is concerned. He points out that the Tyndall-Rayleigh theory would expect the light from the sky to be polarized so that all its waves would vibrate in a particular way. The light produced by Dr. Cohn in the laboratory is not polarized, and daylight is only partly polarized, partly not.