The Free Press Short Story

Nineteen Dollars a Minute

chill enough with the breath of snow old reliable Bartlett look like a sand from the pine-crowned peaks of a few pear. Those pears were the apple of thousand, feet higher, but grass colored AITE eye. And my young stock broke in the narrow valleys of the flooded and early one morning and browsed 'em all riotous rivers. Plowed hillside orchards down." were trim-lined with black-trunked pear trees reaching upward in white pyramids of bloom toward the bluest of skies.

Along a road which parted orchards strolled a young man and a girl. Nick Parker was tall, with a broad solidity like that of the mountains, and sunbronzed even at this early season. Linda Weston was slender and dark, with a hint of the cities in her clothing, and more subtly, in her bearing.

with satisfaction. "With any kind of luck in price, it'll be a big year-for us." dreamily. "I wonder, Nick, shall I really derful new pears." like it up here-for always? It's so dif-I've been used to so many people-"

"You can see more people at once, down in San Francisco. But you can't talk to more than about so many, anywhere, at once, unless you're making a speech. Down there, you might see a hundred thousand people a day, and perhaps not a dozen of 'em would even know who you were. Up here, everybody knows everybody, and we're all friends together."

"And I have you," said Linda. "That's so." Nick agreed, emphatical-

"Everybody has been wonderful to me, even the children in school." "The teacher before you didn't think

them so wonderful. It's mostly youyou get along with people." "I couldn't get along if I didn't. Oh,

Nick! Here comes your brother Alfred!" A duller red glowed in Nick's face as the machine approached. His eyes hardened and fixed themselves on the white pinnacles of the orchard. The battered car lurched past; its tall driver, whose older features bore strong likeness to Nick's returned Linda's greeting with a brief lift of dented felt and a glance and word which pointedly ignored her companion in his busy scrutiny of crop prospects.

"Why, Nick! That was Alf! didn't you speak?" "He didn't hail me, did he?" Nick returned just a trifle shortly.

had quarreled. 'He and Joan have been when they're abroad, I can get along as nice-to-me as anyone in town. 'I like Joan and Alf. I'd looked forward-" "Joan's a good sert."

"And so is Alf. Your only relative left in this part of the country. 'All friends together,' you said just a moment ago. You can't leave out-your own broth-

"I'm not saying anything against Alf. Lots of things sort of break up a family Distance for one thing. Bob, you know, pecially so. If one of them were wholly is running an American farm machinery to blame, it would be easier to make it dollars a minute? Pretty steep." agency in Poland. Lew, Alf's twin, is a mining engineer in Australia. I can't be chummy with them any more, can I? If All wants to act as though he were off at the end of still another hemisphere instead of a mile down the road, I can get along without him."

"But you haven't quarreled with Bob "Oh, no! They write to both of us a couple of times a year." "But what is between you and Alf?

If I'm to be in the family, I have to know. Your oldest brother-".

"Perhaps that's partly it. He's run the family since the folks died-or tried to. I'm not saying anything against the way he's done it; he's got my goat sometimes, but so did I get his; I guess we're about even on that. If Alf hadn't stayed on the ranch with the orchards and sent down nuggets when they were needed, Lew never would have finished at the School of Mines, and Bob never would have made the grades he did at the university. He used to do a bit for me, too, when I was at the 'Ag' Col-

"All that doesn't sound like the beginning of a quarrel.'

"I haven't used the word quarrel yet, have I? I'd call it a situation. What Gate." I've been giving you is the background, ... Byd- Get out! You've joking me." with Alf the Big Man of the family. ing. Well, Alf had been the top-notch telephone service?" orchardist in these parts; got the top "At that price—hardly. I'm mighty the fairs with all manner of ribbons, not sick or anything?" cups and things. When I once got . "No. Or broke. It's costing me good started I began to outscore him, and money to convince you that, this i I've done it four years out of the last merely a social chat. Congratulations, five at the State Fair got the sweep- of course, on the wedding. Sorry I can't stakes three years ago. I think my good be there You'll have old Alf, though. luck rather vexed old Alf. At any rate, Always there solid, like the Sierras he got the Burbank bug, and went to themselves. You don't really miss people cross-breeding pears with the idea, ap- till you get half the world away, among parently, of producing something that folks that talk mostly in consonants in would outscore not only Little Brother, a grammar that—Alf doesn't happen to Minn, was elected President of Kiwanis but the wide world as well. It struck be sitting in with you this evening, does International for 1939-40 at the annual miss affair, with the chances favoring

ERNEST ELWOOD STANFORD ****************** T the middle levels of the Sierras, Alf set up a little nursery under one which were mostly hillsides, it of his hillsides, with a bunch of seedlings was summer. Evenings were that he seemed to think would make the

"But that was a shame!" Of course it was. I'd have paid for

the damage, if anyone could have figured it. Those pears hadn't fruited, and no body could say for certain that the whole lot were worthy fifty cents. But Alf didn't wait for any appraisal; he took the law and a shotgun into his own hands, and sent some rather valuable stock home pretty well peppered. I had to slaughter two of 'em-either of 'em about up. "A full set of pear blooms," said Nick, worth probably, five times as much as Alf. Good luck! So long!" the pear trees. And Alf rather hinted that I'd turned my stock in these to The girl flushed. "For us," she echoed browse off the competition of his won-

> "He shouldn't have done that!" "So I thought."

"But he is your brother. I've liked it!" him-and he certainly never breathed a word of this to me. And I love Joan!" Linda! I'm on more than speaking terms hundred people. We won't lack for Australia." friends. We'll have to make out without without Alf, too, I guess."

"That'll be a good while yet, I guess. but I'm not making any first moves."

"I don't have to ask anybody; that's "It's-that's to-morrow."

come? You couldn'tthe proper time and then stand round! telephone, has he?" and receive congratulations. I'll tell "No. I'm getting plenty of "interna- in common-a vital interest in safety.

ward Alf." "But I don't see any connection-" "I've been trying to make the point "But you've never told me—that you that if I can get along without brothers works, it'll be worth it." they get back together I guess the coals somebody who's pretty clever." of Alf's wrath will have cooled enough to

make speaking safer."

Alf was at work about the ranch, and and a watchful eve on another toddler tion lately." outside the window. "Family quarfels are always silly, and this one seems esup.. But Alf's set; he won't stir-either "If the car hold together, I can get to make it up or-if he knew there was him here in five. And bill me for the to be a wedding-to go to that. He five." thinks the world of his brothers, too-Nick and all of them. If Lew were here,

he could straighten it out." "Not from us . . I know Alf would

be glad to have it all over. But Nick'll have to move first."

One evening, some weeks later, alone in his ranch house, Nick Parker sat reading an interesting book. The telephone suddenly jangled.

"Mr. Nicholas Parker?" "Speaking."

"Hold the line for long distance." After a wait, "Here's your party." Rather faintly, "Hello! That you

"Yes. Who is this?"

"Bob, of course." "Bob? When did you get in? Where are you? San Francisco?" '

A faint hugh came over the wire. "I wish I were. I'm' in Bydgoszcz, Poland. That's quite some miles from the Golden

"If you think that, I'll send you the When I graduated I came up here and little bill for forty-nine fifty, United bought this place on a shoestring, and I States money, that it's cesting me to enmade good, if I do say it myself. I did tertain you three minutes or less. You're not spend four years at 'Ag' for noth- not used to the intercontinental radio

price for his pears and came home from glad to hear your voice. But say-you're

ELECTED I.O.O.F. HEAD



George- H. Elson, of Toronto, was elected Grand Patriarch at the annual session of the Grand Encampment of Ontario, I.O.O.F., in Hamilton,

when you see him?".

"And kiss the bride for me. Time's

Nick hung up the silent receiver. "Byd- Whatever it was! . Away over in Poland! Forty-nine fifty for three germination is illustrated in this week's

-good terms-with everybody else in "Hello! Hello, Nick! Are you there's this end of the county. That's several This is Lew speaking. In Melbourne, up in the fall, replanting them in pots

"Lew! S-say, what's all this about? ment window Bob and Lew and we can get along Bob called in just now from some place in Poland, If-if I find you're both "But some day Bob and Lew will be somebody d-down at the drug store with a s-s-silly sense of humor, I'll-"

"Go to it! You'll find it much easier If they ever do come back. I suppose to send your voice than your fist over we'll bury the hatchet for a day at least, the Pacific Ocean. Just heard of your From me, at least, they know nothing approaching wedding. Congratulations about the fuss. If Alf wants to come off and, of course, regrets that I can't athis high horse. I'll helb him step down, tend. I suppose old Alf will stand up with you, though it should be some "Not even-to ask him to the wed- us bachelors. -Say, do you remember that's it Alf's birthday?"

"We're ahead of you here. Your to-"Would you speak to him if he did morrow is our to-day at this time. am the Voice of the Future, my dear "That's up to Am. A groom at a Nick speaking over the International wedding doesn't go around speaking to Date Idne from to-morrow. You can folks. His only job is to say 'I do' at give my greetings to Alf; he hasn't a Indian brave are worlds apart and yet

you what: When I talk to Bob and Lew tional line' to-night, seems to me. Am The story of King George's interest in "Oh, never mind about that." If it British Isles for many years,

man of your word, aren't you?"

"Y-yes. I-I suppose it would mean a "Yes," said Joan Parker moughtfully. lot to old Alf to hear your voice again." "Or yours, maybe. I gather he hasn't his wife sat with one baby in her arms been getting much brotherly conversa-

"Well, do you want to hold that line

"Ten or fifteen minutes at nineteen

In the dorway. Nick Parker paused just a fleeting moment. Down in the "Do they know about the trouble?" cluster of lights that marked the village in the valley below was one whose position he well knew. It glowed in the window of his bride-to-be. Nick's eyes now focussed upon it.

"You win," he murmured. "And-it's worth all it costs. Pretty clever!"

OVERDOING IT

Kind Lady-My poor man, how did you ever come to such a condition?"-Weary Bill-Ma'am, I'm a victim of overeducation. When I was a kid I read so much about the blessin's of poverty that I jes' natchally couldn't work.

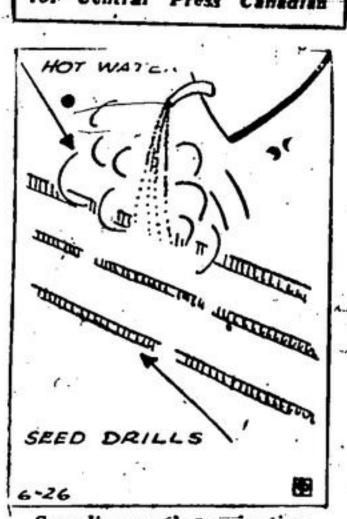
KIWANIS PRESIDENT



Bennett O. Knudson, of Albert Leaf,

Weekly Garden-Graph Written by

DEAN HALLIDAY for Central Press Canadian



Speeding seed germination

Parsley seeds are so slow in germinating that they are choked out by fastgrowing weeds Some gardeners resort With an expression still rather dazed, to the hot water treatment to speed up germination after planting parsley seeds.

The hot water method of speeding up Must've been feeling pretty Garden-Graph. Pour boiling water on lonesome, half the world away. Imagine the seeds where they have been planted in drills, or rows, then cover over very Moments passed. Again jangled the lightly with soil. In three weeks the young sprouts will show above ground. Parsley is a favorite plant for gar-

nishing and seasoning, and plants of it can be kept over winter by taking them which are then placed in a sunny base-

SAFETY IN "INDIAN SIGNS"

One of the most striking things about the Royal visit by the King and Queen was the interest Their Majesties took in heir Indian subjects in Canada.

At every point where Indians turned out to greet the Royal couple both King George and Queen Elizabeth took a keen interest in them-in their life, their work, their families and their colorful costumes. In Calgary, the Indian's made T His Majesty a chief of their tribute and gave him the noble title of Chief Albino

The life of a king and that of an there is one thing they have very much again, then I'll make the first move te- I beginning to get the plot of all this safety work has often been told-how intercontinental conversation at so much he has taken an active and keen part a minute? How much is it costing you?" in accident prevention movements in the

A noted safety expert recently express-"Bob wasn't bashful about letting me ed the belief that if drivers when on the without 'em here. Anyway, by the time know. . . . I'm thinking I'm marrying road would emulate the American Indian in his constant watchfulness for every "Shouldn't wonder a bit. And you're a sign along the road and his interpretation of that sign with relation to his own safety, the accident toll would be greatly reduced.

> This speaker-W. J. Davidson, President of the Society of Automotive Engineers—briefly outlined how Indians took notice of every possible indication presented to them in ensuring their safe passage along rivers or through the woods. They watched for signs other Indians had placed on trees; they examined every track or foot-print they came across; they listened for every sound and sign of movement; and always kept one eye on the weather.

> He spoke of what he termed "the Indian signs" of highway travel, and classified them in two groups. The first group comprised signs placed by highway engineers bearing words of a directive or warning character or bearing merely symbols such as an arrow with a curved tail to indicate a road curve or s straight arrow with a bar through it, indicating the intersection of a side

The second group, he said, comprised messages carried by the highway itself or by phenomena along the highway. which are there to be seen on any ordinary drive but often are either not noticed or not interpreted.

Among many such "Indian signs," he referred to mud tracks on a paved highway, which should indicate a slow-moving farm wagon over the crest of the next hill. Such tracks should be an' immediate warning to slow down and be on the watch. Another sign he spoke of was a cloud of dust to the right or left of the highway, which would indicate a car approaching to enter the main road from a blind side road. "At the first spit of rain on the wind-

shield," said Davidson, "it should be instintive for the driver to test his brakes at the first convenient opportunity." Similar precautions were indicated, he said, when the character of the road surface changed in smoothness or color. He declared that drivers should train themselves to react automatically to such "Indian signs," and that in such instinctive reaction on the part of motorists lay the secret of safe driving.



JEER DIFFERENCE

An American judge, failing to be reelected, was made cashier of a local bank. A man presented a cheque to be cashed

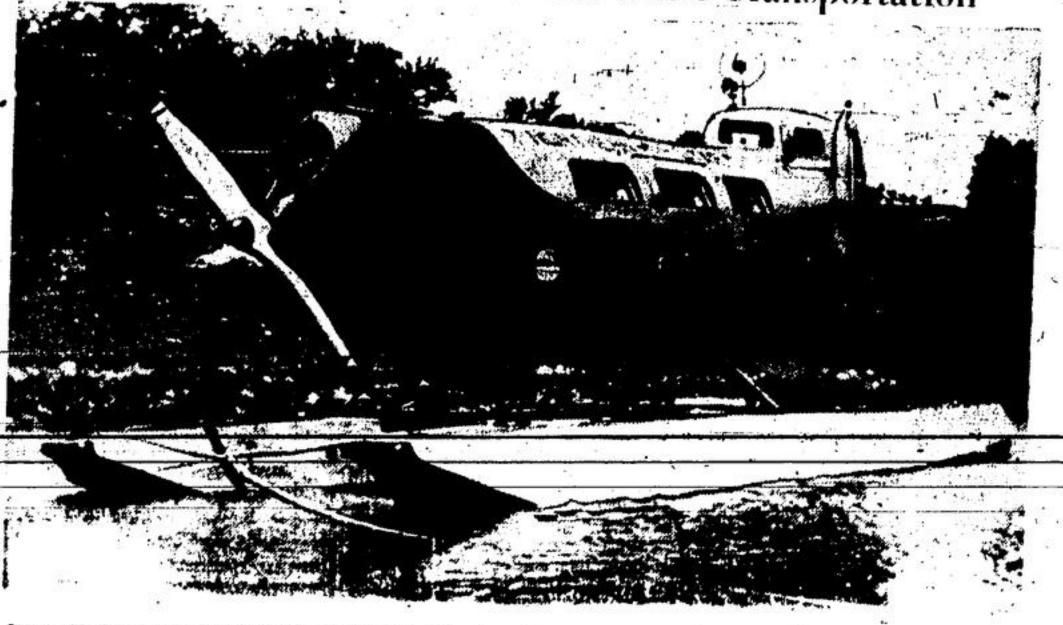
"Don't know you," greated the new eashier. The customer produced a credit card and a lot of letters addressed to him-

"Not sufficient identity." cashier, pushing the cheque back. "Why, Judge," protested the man, "T've known you to hang a man on less evid-

ence than that." "That may be," said the Judge, "but when you're paying out money you have to be careful."

Infuse 6 heaping teaspoons of Salada Black Tea in a pint of fresh, boiling water. After 6 minutes strain liquid into 2-quart container, while hot, add 1 to 1 ½ cups of sugar and juice of 2 lemons, strained, stir until sugar is dissolved, fill container with cold water. Do not allow tea to cool before adding cold water or liquid will become cloudy. Serve with chipped ice. The above makes 7 tall glasses.

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