

The Wheat Question And Soviet Russia Treasure Hunters Of Agriculture

Bewilderment and doubt characterize opinions on the sudden cessation of wheat exports from Soviet Russia. Explanations of this unexpected turn seem colored largely by the sources they spring from. Those who feel that the Soviet regime must eventually collapse name wheat as one more exhibit in their collection of evidence.

Others seek farther to find what is back of it. Beginning with the wheat as it comes out of the ground, the official agricultural organ of Moscow, *Sotzialisticheskoye Zemledelye*, tells us that there was an increase of some 8 or 9 per cent. in the total area of wheat cultivation during the past year, as compared with the preceding year 1929-30.

But this paper also relates that "weather conditions this year have been much worse than they were a year ago." In certain sections of the Ukraine and northern Caucasus, it is said, nearly 47 per cent. of winter sowings was ruined by frost.

Moreover, it didn't help matters, according to this journal, when the collective farms did not reach what was expected of them at harvest time. Scolding the collective farmers, this agricultural authority advises us that: "The information received from various provinces shows that in some places the harvested grain is not bound into sheaves, and so a great deal of it rots. Again, the wheat is transported so carelessly that much of it leaks out and is lost along the roads.

"Worse still is the fact that the grain is left to lie in the fields. There are but a few days during which it can be saved. But some of the collective farms have not even begun to stir in order to save it."

Gathering the grain from collective farms, too, other Soviet newspapers inform us, has been beset with difficulties.

Instead of surrendering to the State all grain in excess of the quantity required for their own needs, to receive in exchange manufactured products from the State, the collective farmers are charged with "hoarding and hiding grain." By way of explanation, the official organ of the Central Committee of the Communist party in Moscow, *Pravda*, has this to say:

"A great majority of the peasants on collective farms still are moved by the old, petty bourgeois psychology of the little individual proprietor. What is the cause of all this upset and delay in harvesting, of the hiding and hoarding of the grain by collective farmers, of their secret splitting up of grain surpluses to be surrendered to the State and, above all, of the bad organization of production on these farms? Obviously, the cause of it is the bourgeois methods which have found their way into the collective farming."

That Russia has fallen behind its schedule for gathering grains from the collective farms, and that the completion of the Soviet fall-sowing plan appears unlikely, is reported by the Department of Agriculture at Washington in a summary of foreign crops and markets. In a United Press dispatch from that city, we read:

"Commenting on the Russian situation, which has been regarded as an important factor in the recent rise in wheat prices, the department said Russian fall sowing now amounted to 87,461,000 acres.

"This is 82 per cent. of the original plan for fall sowings and 87 per cent. of the total winter acreage last year. The report, based on information from the American agricultural attaché at Berlin, said the Russian procurings to October 25 were 84 per cent. of the yearly plan and 39 per cent. of the monthly plan."

An interesting point on Russian wheat production is noted in the *New York Herald Tribune* by Hickman Price, Jr., after a recent extensive tour of Russia to study economic conditions. He observes:

"Even if the peasants, the rawest type of labor, can learn in a few years the intelligent use and proper care of machinery, which it has taken the American farmer three generations to learn, it is still doubtful if over a period of years Russian wheat production can be profitably conducted with the use of foreign-bought machinery.

"A highly important phase of Russian mechanized agriculture is the production of its own machinery and implements. At the present time Russian tractor and implement production seems to be in a chaotic condition.

"According to the *Pravda*, the Fordson tractor factory at Leningrad, which is reported to have cost the Government millions of dollars, was abandoned this summer; the Stalin-grad tractor factory has never reached a satisfactory rate of production and the life of the machine has been estimated at 300 working hours; the implement factory at Rostov-on-Don and a number of other plants are said to be in a deplorable condition.

"Because of a poor knowledge and utilization of metals, the life of these tractors and implements hardly makes their production worth while."

Standpatter—"Doesn't Jim ever get tired of his wife's continued sulking?"

"I think not. He says when she's good natured she sings."—Boston Transcript.

Knowles A. Ryerson as told to Obed Stearns, in "Country Home," Sept. '31. Men always have wanted more plants than they already had, and they never have been satisfied to raise only those plants which they found growing in their particular patches of soil. Thus they have picked up seeds or lifted up plants by the roots wherever they have found them in their wanderings, and tried growing them wherever they settled down.

Consider what would be the state of agriculture in America today if men had been content to grow only native plants. The only major crops would be corn, tobacco and possibly cotton; in the way of vegetables, nothing except sweet corn, squashes and beans. Some inferior varieties of rye and rice, a few berries, some native grapes, crab apples, native plums, pecans would be raised. Little else. No wheat: that was brought in from the Old World. No potatoes: those came from South America by way of Europe.

Although the Department of Agriculture had no explorers of its own until 1898, American in foreign lands, had their eyes open for possible plant introductions long before that time. In 1870, for instance, an American missionary in Brazil wrote to the department extolling the delicious oranges being grown in that country. A first shipment of trees was made, but they all died because of improper packing. They tried again, and at last got 12 trees in good condition, replanted them—and thereby started the Washington naval orange industry. The average annual value of this crop now is \$35,000,000.

In order to understand what is now a regular system of exploration, let us suppose that you looked out in your back yard and saw a stranger, in queer foreign garb, down on his haunches, studying, with apparently fascinated interest, your radish plants. Just as strange and incomprehensible does the plant explorer often seem to the people in whose back yards he must seek out new plants for you to grow. For frequently he is likely to bring back a plant that is as common to those who are growing it as the radish is to you.

For example, in what remote wilderness do you think the late Frank N. Meyer discovered the wild Chinese peach tree? He found it in the garden of the German legation in Peking! It was so commonplace that nobody had ever thought of it before as being worth a second glance.

Meyer was perhaps the most colorful and certainly one of the most useful explorers who ever served the United States government. The greater part of his adult life was spent prowling around in the far, wild corners of the earth, seeking rare and strange plants.

His first work of importance was the introduction of Chinese persimmons in 1905. Studying them, he explored the provinces of Shantung, Shensi, Honan and Chekiang, finally succeeding in importing live scions from the Ming Tombs region northwest of Peking. If you are one of those persons who turn up their noses at persimmons, you should try a "Fam-sim" with a little cream for breakfast some day. This is the variety that Meyer brought in.

One could go on listing Meyer's introductions: the Chinese pistachio, which now grows luxuriantly in California; the Rosa xanthina, that hardy yellow bush rose which keeps many a New England garden gay when all else falls; the jubube, which gives farmers in the dry sections of the Southwest a fruit crop; and the Chinese chestnut, which is blight-resistant and gives promise of saving our chestnut industry from extinction.

Three times Meyer went out into the Orient. Twice he returned. On his third trip he had a nervous prostration. Although after a time he was able to go on with the search—the only thing in life that mattered—health had definitely gone out of him. Soon it would be time to go back to civilization, and the chances of his ever being able to return to his work were practically nil. He never came back. On the night of June 2, 1918, he disappeared from a little steamer on the Yangtze River.

Others carried on. Durum wheat ranks high in their list of introductions: several million acres are planted annually in different varieties; barleys from Asiatic Turkey and from

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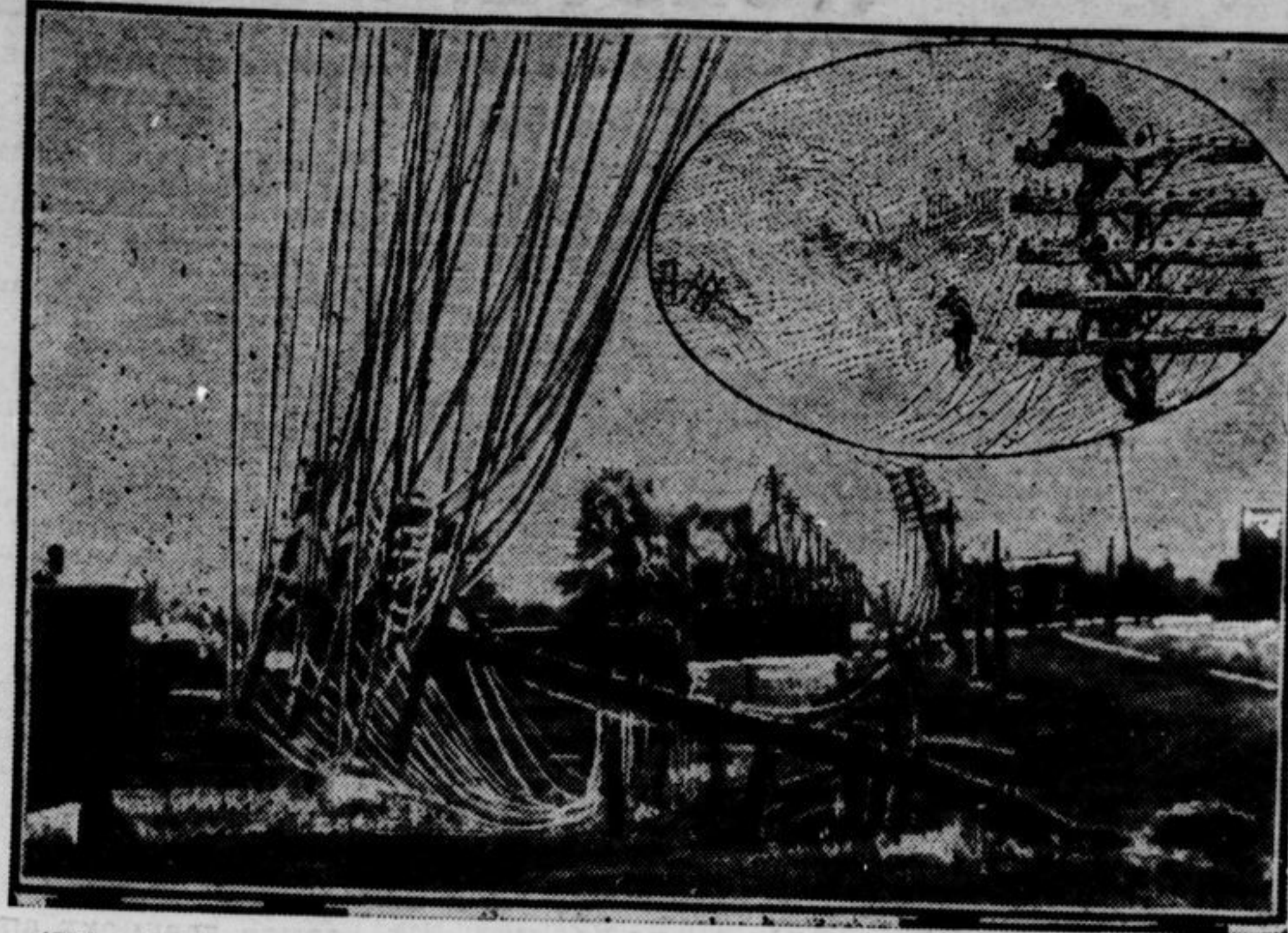
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The Service Must Not Suffer



"Whew! What a gale. There will be trouble on the line tonight!" Lineman Taylor of the Bell Telephone staff was right—there was trouble and plenty of it, especially up around Pembroke when the icy blast from the Laurentians swept down across the Ottawa Valley giving warning to all that King Winter was again holding court.

All through the night and during the next day the forces of the Bell Telephone Company battled the storm which had covered the wires with ice and snapped telephone poles like pipe stems. True, by the following night many of the poles were still down but the service continued practically without interruption by means of emergency cable and the tangled wires and broken poles were rapidly being restored to their usual trim, serviceable appearance. Thousands of dollars worth of expensive equipment, and scores of skilled workmen, must be kept constantly available for just such emergencies in order that the universal service of the Bell Telephone Company may be available to all at all times.

Turning next to peaches, Meyer here encountered his first real trouble, his first duel of wits with the Chinese. Up in the little village of Fei, in Shantung province, they grew an extremely large and luscious peach, often weighing as much as a pound. But Fei was the only place where these peaches grew, and the inhabitants therefore had a very comfortable and profitable monopoly, in the Shantung market. So they didn't take at all kindly to Meyer's attempts to buy a few trees to take away with him.

He argued and pleaded. Finally a native grower offered to sell him his orchard. There seemed no other way to get trees. And when they reached this country, and were replanted and developed it was found that they were not the true Fei peaches after all. The natives won that skirmish, but the government is still after Fei peaches—and will get them in the end.

Such a casual discovery, for instance as a type of disease-resistant spinach, the seed of which Meyer picked up in Liaoyang, has repaid America many times over for sending him on his various expeditions. This spinach was crossed with another variety and the resulting type saved the disease-threatened spinach industry of Virginia and Maryland.

One could go on listing Meyer's introductions: the Chinese pistachio, which now grows luxuriantly in California; the Rosa xanthina, that hardy yellow bush rose which keeps many a New England garden gay when all else falls; the jubube, which gives farmers in the dry sections of the Southwest a fruit crop; and the Chinese chestnut, which is blight-resistant and gives promise of saving our chestnut industry from extinction.

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Egypt are now grown to the extent of about 750,000 acres in regions where rainfall is low; from Russia come the Swedish Select and Sixty-Day Oats now being grown to the extent of 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 acres, respectively. Acacia cotton, found in Mexico, has been developed into a variety which is the foundation of the cotton industry of the Southwest; its annual production reaches a value of \$50,000,000.

Of all the plants which reach this country comparatively few prove good enough, after thorough tests, to go to the trade. And the stories of the explorers who found them somewhere across the globe are, in all probability, lost.

But the explorer who achieves honor in the eyes of his fellow plantmen is well rewarded, for he receives the Frank N. Meyer Medal, which is given for distinguished foreign-plant introduction work. One side of the medal is a reproduction of the white-barked Chinese pine and the jubube, two of Meyer's many introductions. On the other side is a reproduction of the bar-relief which Queen Hatshepsut carved on the Temple of Luxor. Whoever receives that medal has, like Queen Hatshepsut, given his country something more precious than gold and ebony: the lasting wealth of living plants.

A Mender

You came to me world-worn and weary,
Rumpled and tattered of feather,
Whimpering and broken of spirit,
Crying to be put together.

I mended the place that was broken,
I smoothed you, and soothed you,
and kissed you,
And when you were gone I was frantic.

Oh, Lad, if you knew how I missed you.

It seems I'm a fixer, a mender,
And when my poor patients are done
They flutter their wings at my window
And I give them back to the sun.

—P. S. McDonald, in the *Chicago Tribune*.

Photographs were recently taken at a depth of 900 feet below sea level by a research expedition working near Genoa.

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Hospital for Sick Children

67 COLLEGE ST., TORONTO 2
(Metropolitan Centre, Toronto)
(Mother Branch, Thistleton)
December, 1931.

Dear Mr. Editor:
Last year the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, through the generosity of friends in every line of publicity, was enabled to impress upon the parents of Ontario that any crippled or ailing child was equally entitled to the unexcelled service for which this Hospital is world famous. It was also mentioned that if the "Sick Kids" as the institution is affectionately called—were to look after more youngsters, it would need more money for their maintenance.

What happened in 1931 was that more children came to the Hospital, but also about \$10,000 less money to maintain them. I spare you the statistics but I cannot alter the fact that if the Hospital for Sick Children were not a provincial charity, its debts would not be as burdensome as those under which it seems fated to enter 1932.

The Hospital's immediate neighborhood (Toronto and York County) has kept up close to its average subscription per patient. But outside that area there has been a sad drop. What should be done?

The Hospital for Sick Children is not a local concern. Its aim is that no Ontario youngster shall go handicapped through life either because of deformity or disease. That cannot be accomplished with a cash-box full of overdrafts. Yet that is the position to-day and it is not one which can everlastingly continue. So, Mr. Editor, will you not invoke your readers to send us a helping hand? Not one of them, I venture, could care to see the "Sick Kids" with a mortgage over their heads.

Faithfully yours,
IRVING E. ROBERTSON,
Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Threescore Years and Ten

Quick, Sir, help me up—and bring my cane!

'Tis cold tonight, but then I like it so.
I heard a sudden tapping on the pane;
Grey Winter's here again, and so I go
To meet him by some gaunt and leafless tree
Where we can whisper underneath our breath,
And once more jest at that pale Enemy
Whom you may know by sight—I speak of death.

Tonight the jaded world grows old with me;
I hear the fierce Hounds of the Wind give tongue—
Not as in Spring when Zephyr's melody
Recalls those far-off days when I was young—
But loud and wrathful, harbingers of snow,
And though 'tis cold tonight—I like it so.
Dallas Bachs Pratt
—(From *Horae Scholasticae*, St. Paul's School)

A Whistle to Call the Child

A mother who had difficulty in making her little son hear her when she called him, while he was playing out of doors, now uses a whistle for the purpose. She finds that it is much easier to use the whistle than to shout at the top of her voice, also that it is far more effective. The sound carries further and the little chap enjoys being called in that novel way, and it is less personal.

ISSUE No. 50—'31

MACDONALD'S
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Owl Laufs

Daddy—"Young lady, do you mean to tell me you've been carrying that money around in your stocking?"
Daughter—"Why, daddy, you told me to put it where it would draw interest."

Wife—"How do you like me in my new gown? I got it for a ridiculous price."
Hubby—"You mean you got it for an absurd figure."

Ain't science wonderful? One manufacturer asserts that his cigarette is the best because it's toasted and "heat purifies." Another manufacturer who makes a cigar claims it is the best because it has been given a "cold treatment." There you have it, and the public may take its choice and blow smoke either hot or cold.

New Lodger—"Can I have a private bath?"
Landlady—"Yes, sir. We have only one bath tub in the house, but every-one here takes his bath privately."

Willie—"Pop, do angels have pockets in their wings?"
Pop—"No, certainly they do not."
Willie—"Then where will I put my hanky?"

He—"What are all those men doing in a circle with their heads together? Is it a football team?"
She—"No, my dear, just a bunch of Scotchmen lighting a cigarette."

Old Stuff
Brown—"Why do you keep going to the doctor? He said it was no longer necessary."
Jessup—"I'm reading a continued story in one of his waiting room magazines."

Once there was a group of girls and the teacher told them to draw what they were going to be. One was going to be a milliner so she drew some hats; another was going to be a dressmaker so she drew some dresses, and the other did no drawing. The teacher asked her why she did not draw anything, to which she replied: "I'm going to get married and I don't know how to draw that."

We always class the salesman who tries to sell stock that will make you rich, along with the bald headed druggist who sells hair tonic. We can't make ourselves happy by making others unhappy. Some men can't be kept down in the business world and some are like the flapper's stocking—they don't get very high. Courteous people usually are treated courteously. It's easy to make a husband good-tempered, unselfish, and polite. You do it by spanking him regularly, beginning at the age of three. Thrift is like spinach, good for you, but you must cultivate a taste for it.

Stranger—"Why aren't you in school, my little man?"
Child—"Hell, lady, I'm only four."

Unpaid Ad
If the person who stole the jar of alcohol out of my cellar will keep same and return grandma's appendix, no questions will be asked.—Joe Bug-starter.

Common-Sense and Cleverness.
C. E. Lawrence in the Quarterly Review (London) — The inordinate confusion of affairs everywhere now manifest over the wide earth is the result of civilized man's passion for improving and arranging and of his infinite capacity for mismanagement, helped by the narrow rules, conventions, and fashions by which he lives, and his illimitable vanities, greeds, suspicions, frequent unscrupulousness and unseparably silly ambitions. The mere cleverness, which, after material success, is the foremost idol worshipped in our temples of progress, proves often a mere stupidity, and, being at best but shallow, is apt to leave consequences far worse than honest and simple common-sense would have brought. Be the cause what they may for the havoc of blunders in which civilization at present is lost, the world is in a mess so involved and sad that statesmen and so-called practical men, men of the world, are looking with strained attention and anxious eyes to a very doubtful horizon. For tomorrow there may be ruin, and the civilized world may have to re-make itself on simpler, nobler lines.

I'm afraid there are sery days ahead, but no people ever won its freedom with suffering.
—Mahatma Gandi.

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Rangoon's New Airport

The new Mingaladon airport in the suburbs of Rangoon is nearly completed. It has been designed a customs airport and is intended as a station on the Imperial Airways line between London and Australia. A brick-and-steel hangar measuring 130 feet in length, 100 feet in width and 24 feet in height is in course of erection. A second airport, at Hasein, will have a hangar. Landing fields are to be made available at Tavoy, Mergul and Victoria Point. A field at Akyab is available and has been used by Australian-bound fliers, the Department of Commerce reports.

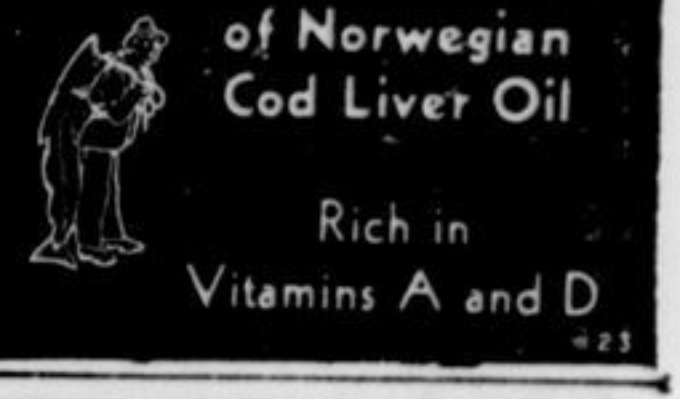
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Neuritis is typical of a dozen other complaints—some minor, some very serious— which all result from impurities in the blood. And it is impure blood, circulating all over the system and setting up inflammation in the tissues, that causes those excruciating pains. Kruschen Salts can be safely trusted to set the matter right. Because Kruschen contains just what Nature needs to persuade your internal organs back into a healthy, normal condition.

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