

MANHATTAN NIGHT

By William Allen Wolf

SYNOPSIS.

Tack Thayer, Peter Wayne's college mate at Yale, lay murdered in his penthouse apartment in New East Fifties. His wife, Martha, was being questioned by Inspector Connolly and Asst. District Attorney Barclay. Peter waited outside, anxious for Martha. Peter ran into Tack in Emma's night club and met Martha for the first time. Before he realized it, he had fallen in love with her. Martha had confessed she was in love with Evan Ross. Betty Rogers told Peter that Martha and Ross were having a late dinner at the Fantomas Club when Tack, who had been drinking heavily as usual, came in. He was prevented from beating Ross up, and then left. As Peter recalled this, Connolly came out and after prolonged questioning, asked Peter if he could tell anything that might lead to the murderer.

CHAPTER XIII

Peter did take time to think over his answer, and that not only because Connolly had asked him to. Murder. Murder was not a thing to be dealt with lightly. And while he didn't think so, he couldn't be sure that he didn't, in fact, possess knowledge that might be of some significance; that some seemingly trivial bit of the information that he, more than any one else he knew, had, concerning Tack and Martha and their tangled, strangely hysterical lives, didn't have some bearing on this tragedy. But then, slowly, he shook his head.

"No," he said. "No, Inspector, I don't believe I do. I can't imagine any motive any one would have for killing Tack Thayer. He had no enemies that I've ever heard of."

"Enemies!" said Connolly. "That's a queer word to be coming into your mind, surely, Mr. Wayne. It's seldom an enemy does a killing—leaving out the mess prohibition's let us in for."

He rose, slowly; stood a moment looking down at Peter, until Peter, too, got up, and stretched himself in the chilly dawn. He was stiff; it had been colder than he had realized, sitting there so long. Once again the elevator came up, and a uniformed policeman stepped out and approached Connolly.

"It's them reporters, Inspector," he said. "They're raisin' hell about bein' kept downstairs."

"Are they so sore now, too?" said Connolly. "It's sore my heart is to be hearing it. Tell them I'll be down presently, or, if they like, they can go over to the house and wait, where there's a nice fire and the desk sergeant for them to be swapping lies with. But tell them we've no room for them up here, O'Brien."

He smiled again at Peter. Then, at a sound, he turned to the door of the penthouse, in which Barclay appeared. The assistant district attorney came out, nodding absent-mindedly to Peter.

"Dr. Johnson'll have a preliminary report for us in a few minutes, Inspector," he said. "Mr. Wayne, Mrs. Thayer is ready to see you now, I think. You'll find her in the dining room." He shuddered, faintly. "The medical examiner is busy in the living room."

Peter went in. Martha was sitting at the table; she raised her head and looked at him as he came in.

"They think I did it, I think they're going to arrest me, Peter," she said, in a quiet, lifeless voice.

He dared not show his feelings.

"Rot!" said Peter. "They know very well you didn't do it." And he told her about the search for the revolver. But she shook her head.

"I know," she said. "I don't mean they think I actually fired the shot. They think Evan did that. And—and—that I helped him. That I'm what they call an accessory."

"If they do they're crazy," said Peter, hotly.

"Of course," said Martha. "Peter—you know Evan didn't do it, don't you? He didn't even come upstairs with me when he brought me home. I never let him, just—just because he and Tack— Oh, and tonight, at all nights!"

She got up, and came around the table, and put her hands on Peter's shoulders.

"Peter—" she said. "I'm afraid, I'm terribly afraid, I've never been really afraid before in all my life."

In the next room there was an explosion, and a cloud of pungent smoke came creeping through the interstices of the closed door. Martha screamed, and Peter's arm closed about her, instinctively. It was the first time that he had ever embraced her.

"Steady, darling—" he said. "They must have used a flashlight. They—they always take pictures, I've heard."

"Oh—oh—I didn't know!" she said. She clung to him, sobbing. "I didn't know."

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precision with which Martha's slight was arranged. The house phone buzzed, and in a minute Axel came up for them in the car. Martha and Peter hung back while Charley stepped out.

"Go west—give him the address later!" called Charley. "Good luck!"

They were off, with two or three young men running after them, shouting angrily. Peter laughed; that bit of action was exactly what he had needed. The cab turned up Second Ave.; turned west again, a block north, and Peter knocked on the window, then, and gave the driver Carol's address.

(To be continued.)

English Mystery Writer Delves Into Arab Love

London.—Miss Agatha Christie, the novelist, has just arrived back in England, after an adventure as romantic as anything in her own novels.

For six months she has been living in an Arab's house in the Mesopotamian desert, with her husband, M. E. Mallowan, and other members of the British Museum expedition to Tal Arpachiyah, near Nineveh. Here she has been helping to unearth clues to a lost prehistoric civilization.

The discoveries made by Miss Christie and her husband throw light on the mode of life, customs, and religious rites of a people who lived at least 7,000 years ago—centuries before the rise of Ur.

Findings made in her excavations, Miss Christie said, include: Mud and brick houses clustered round a central court. Pottery of egg-shell thinness, decorated in bright black and red paints in geometric designs and shapes, which compare with the finest work of classical Greece. Marble pendant of an ox's head, of exquisite workmanship. Tiny terra-cotta figures of goddesses, whose painted clothing is suspended by braided jewelry, including amulets and beads. A circular grainary, containing wheat thousands of years old.

"It was exciting work," Miss Christie declares. "My job was to clean the finds, and you can imagine the thrill of rubbing away dust and dirt to find, say, an amulet worn 7,000 years ago."

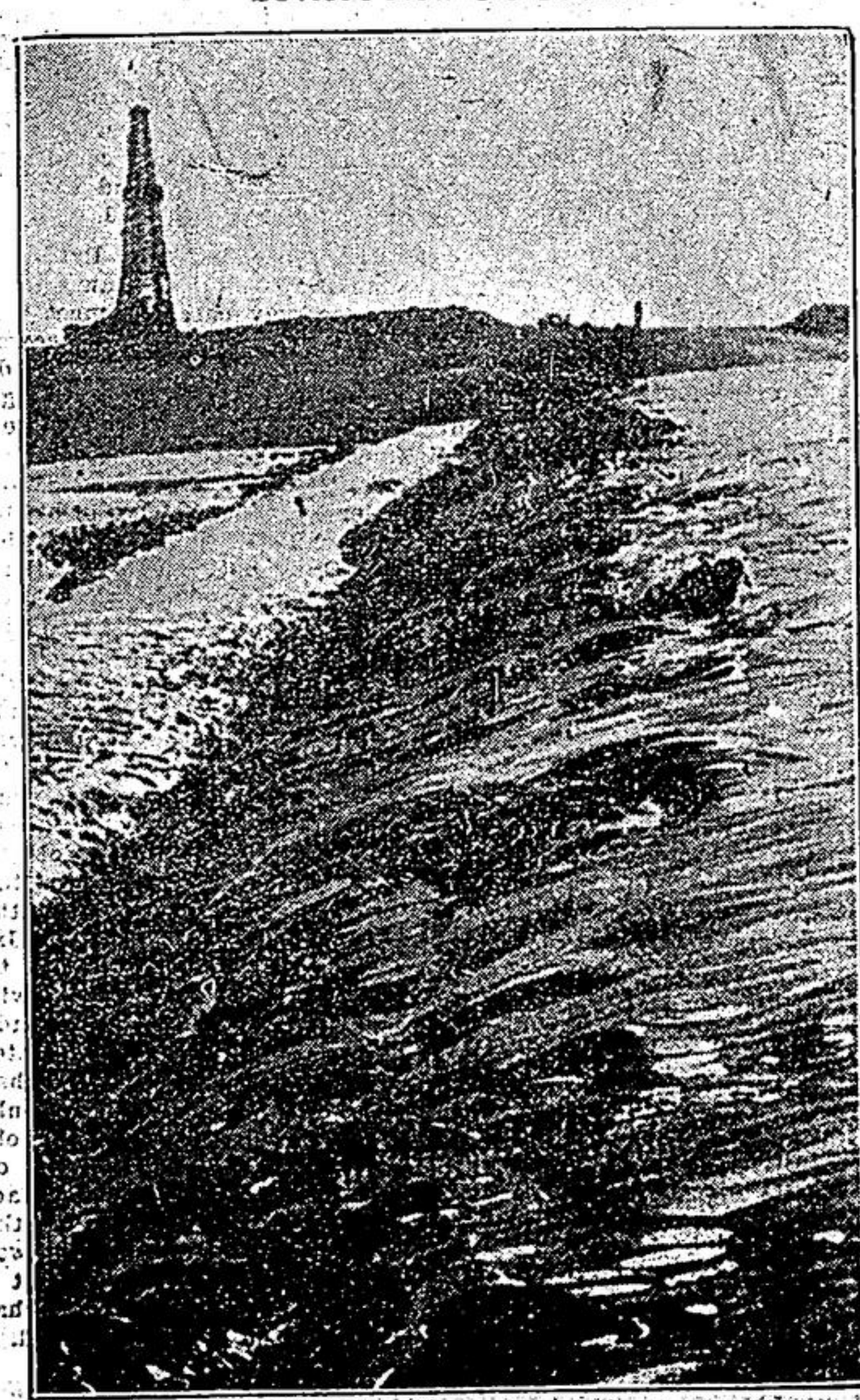
"I was also in charge of the photographic work, and in addition acted as chief cook and washer-up."

Shortly the finds will be on view in the British Museum.

Remember Your Pets

Advises the Montreal Daily Star: "The annual appeal of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to householders who are spending the summer in the country to remember their pets merits wide publicity. Every year there is a pitiful record of dogs and cats and birds having been left behind in closed houses to starve to death. It is incredible that anybody with decent instincts would do this intentionally. Of course it is due to forgetfulness. And it is with the express intention of reminding those liable to forget that the S.P.C.A. calls attention to the fact that in all cases where people find they cannot take their pets with them, the society will undertake either to call for them, or to receive them at its headquarters, and give them a swift and painless end. The society has authority to enter closed houses where pets have been left behind, but its appeal is to the humanitarian instinct of all who keep dogs, cats or birds in their homes. It is an appeal that ought not to go unheeded in a single instance."

Soviet's New Oil Gusher



A view showing the great rush of oil gushing from the new well at Lock-Batan, in Soviet Russia. Much of the precious fluid was lost because drillers were unprepared for such a tremendous spurt.

Queer Things in Rockefeller Centre

Six hundred members of the New York Electrical Society recently inspected the 850-foot central building of Rockefeller Centre, from lobby to roof.

They investigated there some of the curious scientific anomalies resulting from its great size and height.

To quote a statement issued by the society:

"One of the experiments while the party was on the roof, 850 feet above the street, included the dropping of a plummet down an elevator shaft to show that a body falling from this great height does not fall straight downward—that is, does not follow a plumb-line, but because of the earth's rotation is carried about five and one-third inches to the eastward, toward Fifth Avenue, by the time it reaches the ground."

"Also it was revealed that Mr. John D. Rockefeller in his new offices on the upper floors of the seventy-story structure will have the experience of traveling more than a mile farther each day, as the earth rotates, compared with his daily rotation in the former offices nearer the ground, according to figures computed by a lightning calculator in the party."

"The electric-eyes which control the elevator doors in the building came in for careful examination, while the large crowd of science visitors was being whisked aloft at 1,200 feet per minute. One fat lady in the party unconsciously protruded slightly across the elevator, causing an eclipse of the electric eye on guard. Instantly this electric automaton took control of the situation, reopened the elevator doors and blocked the elevator from moving, until the fat lady could be gotten back within bounds. Fifty-eight elevators in the Rockefeller Centre group are being equipped with these electric-eye safety features."

Number of Ash Blonde Babies is Increasing

Twice as many blonde babies are being born in Britain now as there were ten years ago.

Doctors say that modern developments in the diet and habits of their mothers are responsible.

If the babies were 20 years older, they would be called ash blondes, a shade extremely rare only a few years ago.

Now one has only to walk through any park to see dozens of children with hair of the fashionable shade. The reporter recently counted 15 in a minute and a half.

As a Harley Street doctor explained: "A diet of fresh vegetables and salads with a fair supply of meat contains those ingredients which might be expected to lead to fair hair and skin."

"Fresh air and exercise may also affect the coloring of children, indirectly by making the parents more healthy. We are going back to the appearance of our Viking ancestors."

The chief secret of comfort lies in not suffering trifles to vex us, and in prudently cultivating our undergrowth of small pleasures, since very few great ones, alas, are let on long leases.—Sharp.

The bliss of the drunkard is a visible picture of the expectation of going atheist, who hopes no more than to lie down in the grave with the "beasts that perish."—Jane Porter.

Tending Graves New Occupation for Women

"Bride Broder," writing in the Toronto Mail and Empire, says:

"One of our correspondents writes: 'In these days when women are looking for means whereby they may earn the odd dollar, it struck me that many more might do so as one woman I know has done. She has offered to care for the graves in a country churchyard, placing fresh flowers there each week. It seems a reasonable occupation for a woman in the quiet country places, and I am sure there are many people living in cities who would be glad to contribute something towards keeping the family plot in the little churchyard tidy and beautiful. Of course, this brings one, I know, to the proper upkeep of cemeteries, but at all events, I thought you'd be interested in what seems to be a new occupation for women.'

"If this suggestion were generally adopted many country churchyards, a tangled but lovely, garden of nature's own planting, would be saved from those devastating onslaughts known as 'clearing up the cemetery.' Too often the bonnie brier bush at the head of the grave has been torn up and an aluminum-tinted tin affair of some kind bearing the word 'Father' or 'Darling' planted in its place; the tree that cast a grateful shade or held a nest of robins in its hair, has been cut down; the blue-flowered periwinkle that clothed the grass in rich, luxuriant green, has been torn up. Were a woman to have individual responsibility, these well-meant errors might be avoided."

They found also that acetic acid, the acid of ordinary vinegar, could be produced from ethyl acetate when exposed to intense sound waves. Ethyl acetate is a substance which is chemically somewhat similar to fats. They were able to "crack" vegetable oils to produce acetylene gas and other substances. Like investigators working in the super-sonic range they were able to turn glucose, or grape sugar, into starch in small amounts.

Most interesting perhaps were studies of water solution in the ordinary table salt. Hence the dissolved oxygen yielded free chlorine gas in solution. Since some salt is present in milk, it might be possible that this free chlorine is the agent which kills the bacteria. Florsdorf and Chambers do not think so, however, since a quantity of chlorine sufficient to kill bacteria cannot be liberated in the short space of time in which the intense audible penetrates the milk. They believe, rather, that it is the change in the protein of the bacteria which results in their instant death.

Although chemical changes can be produced in milk with prolonged sound treatment the physicians regard these effects as insignificant, considering the short length of time necessary to kill bacteria. The coagulation of the proteins might be expected to make the milk even more digestible than before.

There is nothing unusual in these reactions since all of them can be produced by other means. "In fact," says Florsdorf and Chambers, "we believe that all of these chemical effects may be an acceleration entirely due to a momentary kinetic effect on the molecules such as is produced by high temperature."

A Bull-fighter's Farewell

Senoritas in mantillas and high-backed combs, applauded frantically the other day as Spain's most daring bull-fighter, twice wounded, was carried about the ring shoulder-high after killing two bulls in his farewell performance.

When it came time to cut off his pigtail in token of his retirement, the crowd protested so loudly that the pigtail stays on. It is getting gray, and its owner—Matias Lara, whom all Spaniards know as "Larita"—is growing stout. Retirement costs him a struggle, however, for the sport has afforded his own burning interest in life, and the Auckland (New Zealand) Weekly News tells us:

As a lad he played with boys of his own age at bull-fighting in the streets, using any red rag that came to hand, while one of his comrades, with a pair of horns, snorted and charged like a bull.

When still a youth "Larita" displayed his prowess by jumping into the ring in the course of a bull-fight and playing the bull like a finished tovero, amid the frantic applause of the people; for the bull-fighting public loves and encourages a fearless and promising "suicide," as these youthful aspirants are called.

From that day onward "Larita's" progress was a triumph. He soon became a novillero, or fighter of young bulls, and his utter contempt of danger, hair-breadth escapes and wounds won for him the enthusiastic admiration of the spectators.

"Larita" might have been the greatest bull-fighter in Spain had he not elected to sacrifice art not only to courage, but to a certain childish clownishness, which pleased the gallery, but was severely condemned by connoisseurs of the art as being undignified. So that today Belmonte reigns supreme as master of the art, Nino de la Palma as the most graceful, and "Larita" as the most fearless bull-fighter.

Kreuger Inquiry Reports Complete in 8,000 Pages

Stockholm.—After fourteen months' work by the Stockholm police, the criminal investigation of the affairs of Ivar Kreuger, has been completed. The results are embodied in fifty reports, the equivalent of an 8,000-page book.

More than fifty persons have been formally prosecuted and of these twenty have been sentenced.

Many new points of law have been raised during the investigation, especially as regards "swindling of the general public" and responsibility of directors of a company for false book-keeping.

K. G. A. Sandstrom, Protecting Attorney, has announced his intention of seeking changes in some of the prevailing laws.

There is virtue in country houses, in gardens and orchards, in fields, streams and groves, in rustic recreations and plain manners, that neither cities nor universities enjoy.—Alcott.

Sound Cooks Egg

It has been only a short time since it was announced that intense sounds, both audible and super-sonic, could kill bacteria in milk, water, fruit juices and other liquids. At the current science convention in Chicago, Drs. E. W. Florsdorf and L. A. Chambers, of the School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, have continued this work and sought an answer to this simple question: If these sounds can kill bacteria what chemical changes will they produce in the liquids that contain the organisms? In milk, for example, will sounds change the chemical nature of the desirable proteins; sugars and fats?

For proteins the Pennsylvania scientists found that intense sounds, in their apparatus will start coagulation instantly. A hen's egg treated in this fashion for a few minutes, at room temperature, appears to have been soft-boiled.

They found also that acetic acid, the acid of ordinary vinegar, could be produced from ethyl acetate when exposed to intense sound waves. Ethyl acetate is a substance which is chemically somewhat similar to fats. They were able to "crack" vegetable oils to produce acetylene gas and other substances. Like investigators working in the super-sonic range they were able to turn glucose, or grape sugar, into starch in small amounts.

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A Good Hint to Inventors

Don't try to devise a machine that will imitate man's motions. Human motions are reciprocating on "to and fro"; most machines have rotating parts. Man's legs move in steps; the wheels of an auto or a train go round and round.

This is the editorial advice of a writer in Roads and Streets (Chicago). He says:

"In the shop of an old inventor with whom the writer worked for a time there hung this motto: 'What the hand does, a machine can do.' Perhaps the motto expresses undue faith in machinery, but it is the sort of faith that inventors should have."

"This old inventor, Ross by name was wont to add: 'But don't let your machine imitate the hand.' He went on to explain that the fingers and the arms are levers that move back and forth. Their motion is a reciprocating motion, whereas rotary motion is the most effective in machinery."

"For example, he said, a carpet-sweeper has a rotary broom, whereas a broom wielded by the arm moves back and forth."

"At times there appears to be no substitute for the intelligence that guides the hand, says the writer. Thus in separating diamonds from their 'blue ground' matrix, only the hand guided by the eye was effective, until one day a man chanced to observe that a diamond that fell upon a thin layer of grease adhered strongly to it. Strangely enough, neither quartz nor any other common mineral seemed to adhere so strongly to grease.

"When the 'blue ground' containing diamonds was washed down an inclined table coated with grease, only the diamond were checked and held by the grease."

Here again was no imitation of the human hand and eye. He goes on: "Until men invented boats, the legs were their only means of transportation—either their own legs or those of animals. Legs like arms operate back and forth. Had some early inventor attempted to produce a transport machine having legs, he would have failed."

The first transport machine was probably either a floating log, or a rolling log; the former being the progenitor of the boat; the latter of the two-wheeled cart or the wheelbarrow. In the case of the wheelbarrow we have reciprocating legs replaced by a revolving wheel.

"This was mechanically efficient because the load was not lifted intermittently. A walking man lifts his weight every step. It became economically efficient not only for that reason but because men or animals could haul much greater loads than they could carry."

"The wheel and axle is man's first great mechanical invention, with the possible exception of the bow and arrow. In the wheel we see no imitation of the legs. In the bow we see no imitation of the arm for the arm does not hurl a spear by virtue of energy stored up in a spring."

"When man successfully rivaled the birds, it was not by imitating the up and down motion of their wings, but by using 'planes' driven by a rotating propeller."

"These examples serve to indicate the wisdom of avoiding a servile imitation of the operation of the arm or leg or wing. On the other hand, there have been many occasions when close imitation of nature has led to successful invention."

Countess Szechenyi Marries American

London.—One of the most fashionable weddings of the June season was that of Countess Cornelia Szechenyi, 24, daughter of the new Hungarian minister to Great Britain, Count Laszlo Szechenyi, and Eugene Bowie Roberts, of Maryland, at the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Assumption.

A notable gathering of London society, including several ambassadors and their wives, the United States envoy, Robert W. Bingham; and Mrs. Bingham, among them, attended the wedding.

Roberts is a son of Mrs. Eugene Roberts, of Prince George County, Maryland.

The couple left for a honeymoon on the Continent before proceeding to the United States to live.

Striking Costumes Worn at Lonchamps

Lonchamps, France.—Birds of paradise, alpacas and monkey fur trimmed the most striking costumes worn at the racing for the grand prix, predicting the possible return to the vogue of elegance.

The large black velvet hat trimmed with black birds of paradise was worn with black gloves, a black frock and a beige coat.

Black suede gloves edged with black monkey fur from wrist to elbow and a black monkey fur coat were worn with a pale blue crape frock.

Eighty monks have left Rangoon to convert the peoples of Europe to Buddhism. They will wear robes made of rags, eat only once a day, and sleep always in the open during their mission.