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THIS WEEK'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

A PATTERN OF CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

Golden Text.—Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.—Rom. 12:9

THE LESSON AS A WHOLE

Approach to the Lesson
A very popular bit of philosophy runs: "Sow a thought, and reap an act; sow an act, and reap a habit; sow a habit, and reap a character." The only difficulty with this sequence is that it is not true. Character is what we begin with, not what we end up with. What a man determines his thinking and his acting and his habits. Worldly wisdom so often begins at the wrong end.

For sound moral philosophy there is no text like the Bible, and the Apostle Paul follows sound teaching of the rest of the Book. He does not advise men to change their way of thinking and acting to develop better character, but he shows the divine provision for making men over, for bestowing upon them a new character, but he shows the divine provision for making men over; for bestowing upon them a new character, and then indicates how that new character will manifest itself in new conduct. Christian behavior is always the response of the new man to the divine work within.

This is why the Epistles of Paul are generally built on the simple plan of a doctrinal section followed by practical exhortations and instructions about behavior. So it is in the Epistle to the Romans. The first eleven chapters are full of doctrine. In them we learn how God makes unrighteous men righteous. Then four chapters are given to practical matters of Christian living, showing how the man who has been made righteous is expected to act in various relationships.

Perhaps a brief outline of the Epistle would be of value

to the class. Here is a suggestion:

1. Preface (Rom. 1:1-17)
 2. Condemnation (1:18 to 3:20)
 3. Justification (3:21 to 5:21)
 4. Sanctification (6:1 to 8:39-12:9)
 5. The Mystery of Israel (9:1 to 11:36). This section may be regarded as parenthetical so far as the continuity of the thought is concerned.
 6. Behavior (12:1 to 15:33)
 7. Salutations (16:1-27)
- At the 1932 Keswick Convention in England, Dr. W. Graham Scroggie gave the Bible Readings in Romans. These studies have been published under the title "Salvation and Behavior" (Pickering and Inglis, Ltd., Glasgow C. 2, Scotland, 5-6). I heartily commend this small but compact and rich volume.

Verse by Verse
Rom. 12:1.—"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, your reasonable service." This is to be a once-for-all act, and it lies at the basis of all practical holiness. As Christ offered Himself in a prepared body (Heb. 10:5) for death, so we are to yield our bodies in life, as instruments of the will of God. Such an offering is described as "holy, acceptable, . . . reasonable."

Verse 2.—"And be not conformed . . . transformed . . . that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." We must not make "this age" (Gr.) our pattern, but by a continual renewal of the mind, an inward process wrought by the Holy Spirit, we must give outward expression to an inner condition. This is the transfigured life, in which the will of God is done, and found to be "good, pleasing, and perfect."

Verse 9.—"Let above be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." There is no place for pretense in the Christian life. Love is the basic virtue and the fountain of all the others. It will assure an abhorrence of all evil, and a delight in all good.

See Psalm 45:7.

Verse 10.—" . . . kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another." Here is love within the family circle of the saints, which is to be gracious, tender, and eager to see our brethren rather than ourselves honored. Do we measure up here?

Verse 11.—"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." Three more expressions of love. Luther translates the first, "Be not lazy as to what you ought to." The "serving" in the third phrase is that of a bond-slave, but it is voluntary.

Verse 12.—"Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer." We have a sure hope (Titus 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:3-5) which should keep us rejoicing. When tribulation arises, that same hope will sustain us. Steadfast prayer will keep that hope fresh and living, and will give us endurance in the trying hour.

Verse 13.—"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality." Saints are not always exempt from temporal needs, and such occasions are opportunities for fellow saints to show the love of God in a practical way. Hospitality does not mean doing a lot of social entertaining, but receiving the saints into one's home to care for them as occasion arises.

Verse 14.—"Bless them which persecute you . . . curse not." See Luke 6:28. We are followers of Him who prayed, "Father, forgive them." This is not easy when we feel the sting of the persecutor's lash, but the love of God is equal to this also.

Verse 15.—"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." There is to be no envy against those who prosper, nor gloating over the hurt or the distressed. Our rejoicing and weeping must not only be appropriate, but sincere.

Verse 16.—" . . . the same mind . . . Mind not high things, but condescend . . . Be not wise in your own conceits." The first phrase is a call to harmony, the second to lowliness.

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wrong us. And we are far too thoughtless in the matter of obedience to the ordinances of the state, such as traffic law, income tax, custom duties, and so on. We all need more beauty of character (17b):

WEDDING

DIXON—GOODWIN

At the ceremony in St. John's Chapel, Toronto, July 27, Rita Cecilia, daughter of Mrs. Charles Goodwin became the bride of Eldon Irwin, son of Mr. Alfred Dixon.

Given in marriage by her brother, Jack Goodwin, the bride wore a floor length gown of white satin and lace. Her fingertip veil was held by a crown of seeded pearls, and she carried a bouquet of red roses and white mums.

Her only attendant, Ileen Mitchell, sister of the groom as bridesmaid wore a floor length gown of yellow tulle and carried a nosegay of mixed flowers.

Best man was the bride's brother Harry, while the ushers were Gorman Dixon and Patrick Goodwin.

Reception was held at the home of the bride's mother where she received wearing navy blue sheer with white accessories and wore a corsage of red roses. Mrs. Stanley Irwin, aunt of the groom received wearing grey nylon sheer with navy accessories and corsage of red roses.

For travelling through the Muskoka district, the bride wore a mauve nylon net dress with white accessories. On their return they will live in Toronto.

WEDDING

CARSON—RADFORD

Ballantyne United Church was the scene of the wedding of Lois Carmeletha Carson, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. A. Chibald Carson, of Frankford, Ont., to Robert Ernest Radford, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Radford.

The bride's father officiated, assisted by Rev. Frank Mulholland. The bride chose a gown of white nylon net over satin topped by Chantilly lace with scalloped edges, which fell over her bouffant skirt. Her fingertip veil of nylon net was arranged from a coronet of lace and seed pearls and she carried red roses and baby's breath. Mrs. Kenneth Campbell, matron of honor wore midnight blue nylon net with matching stole. Her other attendant, Mrs. John Radford was gowned in pink nylon net with stole. Shirley Morning was flowergirl and wore pink taffeta. They wore wreaths of flowers and carried nosegays of pink and blue carnations.

The flowergirl carried a basket of rose petals. John Radford was best man. Ushers were Royce Carson and James Radford. The bride's mother wore a crepe and aleon lace dress with matching accessories and corsage of pink and yellow roses. The groom's mother chose a navy blue dress with white accessories and corsage of pink roses.

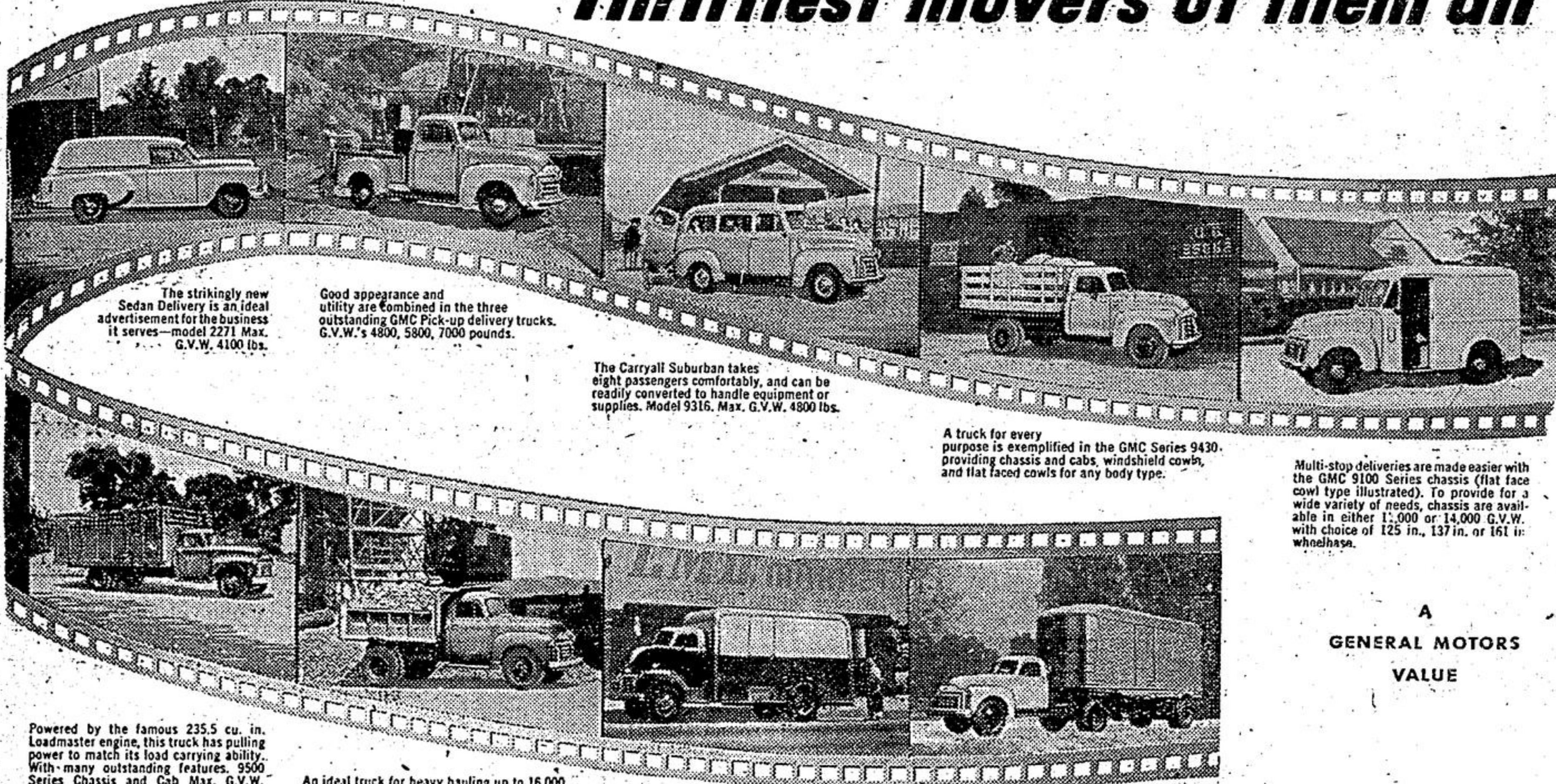
There's not as much activity as usual in straw hats this spring says a dealer. Maybe the wind has died down.

If it weren't for pants pockets and bank rolls, most wives would go through about half as much for friend hubby.

A man who sold peanuts and popcorn for 25 years has retired. We hope he also salted a world, especially when people fortune.

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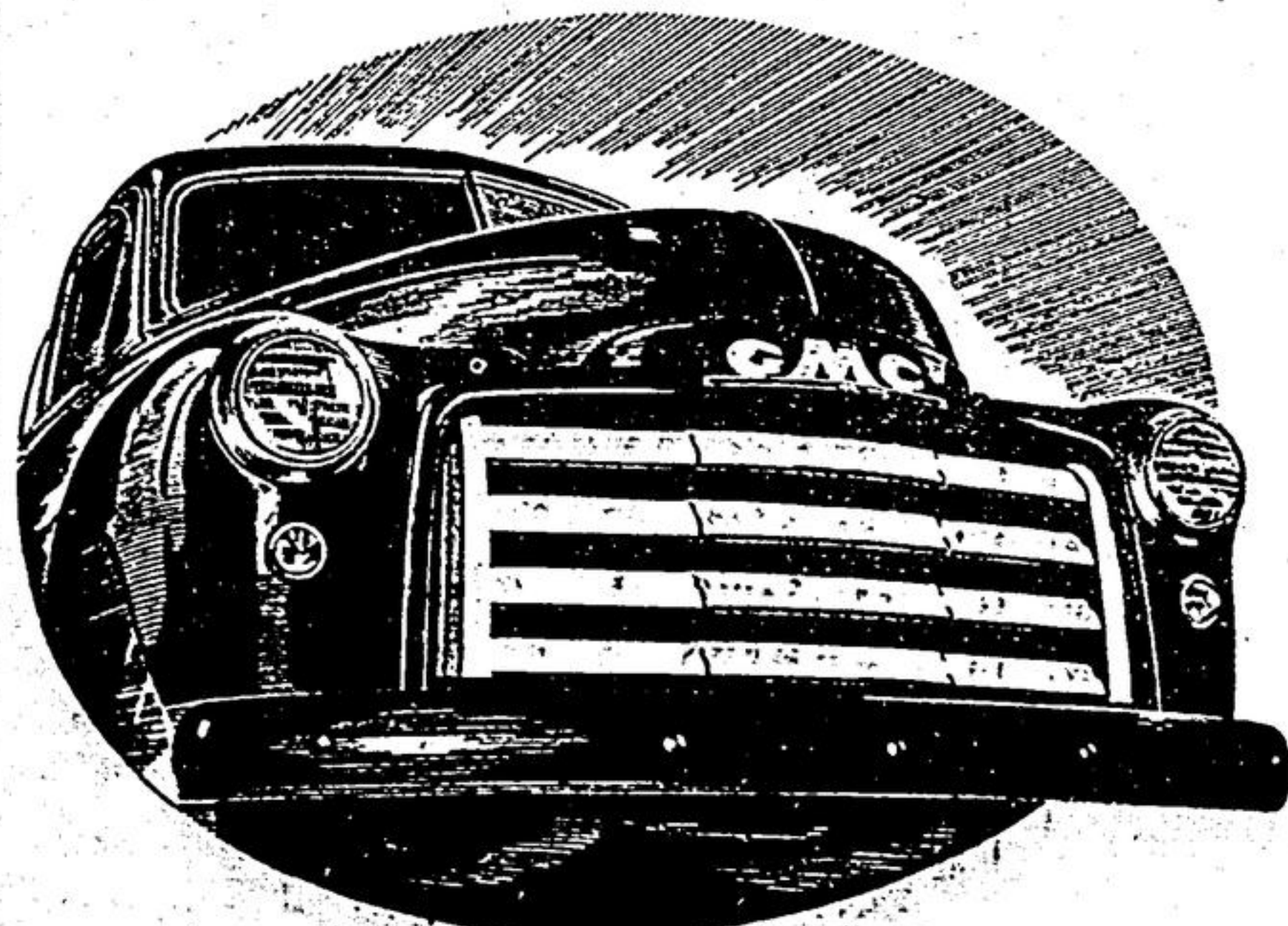
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