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-- Overlook On Life --
 By WARREN S. REEVE
 Note: The idea of "Overlook" is taken from the Overlooks provided for viewing panoramas along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

On this threshold of the month of February my thoughts are carried back to Japan where the plum trees, heralding the spring, are about to burst into bloom. The Japanese love their plum blossoms almost as much as the cherry blossoms, and crowds will travel miles on a train to see a grove that is decked with the flowers. For the Japanese are an imaginative people, which means that precious thoughts and sentiments are pictured in mental images. The plum blossom speaks to them of the spring time soon to come. Often the trunk of a plum tree will appear hollow and dead in the New Year season; and then a month later it will shoot forth beautiful buds to prove that it is very much alive. Thus, it is the symbol of renewal, teaching us to live bravely and hopefully even through the cycles of desolation that smite us from time to time.

In 1924 a frightful earthquake hit Tokyo and Yokohama, causing charcoal fire-pots to upset and electric systems to be short-circuited, with the result that vast areas were reduced to ashes by a mighty conflagration.

Days later when it was at last safe for one to pick his way amid the charred ruins, a pathetic man poked around, vainly hoping that he might come across traces of the bodies of his wife and children. He alone had survived — how, he scarcely knew. He would like to have died too! Suddenly he spied something — a lone blade of grass. How out of the fiery furnace it could have been preserved was a wonder! Then he thought: "It is a parable of myself! I also am left alone. But I must live! I must grow again, starting from what I am now". And so from the little, lone spike of grass he found a meaning in life.

The plum blossoms have spoken annually for centuries in a similar way to countless Japanese lovers of flowers. More than a thousand years ago there was a

knight who was at the same time the greatest scholar of his generation, who for low-down political reasons was banished to a distant territory. On the eve of his departure from home, he composed the following little poem:

"When the east wind blows,
 Send out thy perfume,
 O plum blossom.
 Though thy master wanders
 Homeless far away in exile,
 Forget not to sing of spring!"

The plum blossom's delicate fragrance suggests to the Japanese that we should make our lives beautiful; that others who come within proximity of us may never be repulsed, but rather that they may be drawn to us and enjoy pleasurable sensations from our presence.

The plum tree, moreover, lives to a great age. The Japanese, noticing this, find that it nurtures in them the hope of long life for themselves. This mood is woven with one that is just the opposite, paradoxical though it may seem. The cherry blossoms are loved in part because of the pathos of their short life. They symbolize the transience of mortal existence.

Most people shrink from anything that would shorten life. Only rarely and on rare occasions are there those who would like to die. Why is it that the urge to live is so strong in nearly every one? My only answer is that God put within us the instinct to preserve our lives. It is rather amazing that He should have done that! When we think of our blessings and enumerate to ourselves things we are thankful for, I wonder if it has occurred to any of us to include this passionate desire to go on living? We have probably rarely, if ever, given it thought. We have just taken it for granted. Yet in comparison with things we are consciously grateful for, it is more fundamental than all. We are thankful that we escaped an accident on the highway, or that we have had good health, or that after having been

HELEN GORTNEY WINS HONOR AT COLUMBIAN HIGH SCHOOL

The Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow in Clearmont School is Helen Gortney.

She received the highest score in a written examination on home-making knowledge and attitudes, administered Dec. 4, to senior girls in the graduating class. Her examination paper will be entered in competition to name this state's candidate for the title of All-American Homemaker of Tomorrow and will also be considered for the runnerup award in the state. For her achievement, she will receive an award pin designed by Trifari of New York.

The national winner in the third annual search conducted among 300,526 young women in 11,636 of the nation's public, private and parochial high schools will be named May 2 at the American Table banquet in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City.

General Mills is sponsor of the program designed to assist schools in education for home and family living and to emphasize through a sound scholarship award program the personal qualities and sense of values necessary to successful homemaking. A total of \$106,000 in scholarships will be awarded.

Each state Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow will receive a \$1,500 scholarship and an educational trip with her school advisor to Washington, D. C., colonial Williamsburg, Va., and New York City. A \$500 scholarship will be awarded the runnerup girls in each state. The school of the state winner will receive a set of the Encyclopedia Britannica.

The scholarship of the young woman named All-American Homemaker of Tomorrow will be increased to \$3,000. This year for the first time girls who rank second, third and fourth in the national finals will receive \$4,000, \$3,000 and \$2,000 scholarships, respectively.

sick we got well. We are thankful for the food that sustains life and for the innumerable things that make life worth living, so we say. And yet all these things would be in vain if there were not the longing to live, and the effort to preserve ourselves and others. What a blessed endowment this is that God gave us!

I recollect reading the story of a mother carrying her baby and leading her five-year-old little boy along the streets of Manila immediately at the close of World War II. Havoc and desolation were all around. These poor refugees were tottering and emaciated from privation. The little boy repeatedly pulled away from his mother, wanting to sit down on the curb, saying he didn't want to go on; saying also he didn't care if he would die. Pathetic, abnormal little creature! The woman, put on her mettle for the sake of

her children, had a stout heart. "Come on", she said. "We must go. You are not going to die. You mustn't die, you have to live!" "Live", she reiterated, and on she dragged him, no doubt saving him for a later life of some purpose.

January and February bring their bleak days, but plum blossoms and blades of grass brave even Nature's surrounding desolation, telling us that life and beauty are alive, and that we are to get up and go on.

In its season, Easter will come too, and from its message we shall discover that behind heaven and earth is a God who raises whom He will to life and immortality through the Gospel.

BURNSVILLE SCHOOL MENUS

Thursday, Jan. 31: Hamburgers, lettuce, onions, baked sweet potatoes, plums, buns, milk.

Friday, Feb. 1: Turkey, gravy, dressing, rice, buttered green peas, peach halves, hot biscuits, butter and milk.

Monday, Feb. 4: Vegetable beef sandwiches, pineapple upsidedown cake, loaf-bread, butter, milk.

Tuesday, Feb. 5: Hot dogs, baked beans, chopped onions, slaw, cookies, buns, milk.

Wednesday, Feb. 6: Hamburgers, lettuce, onions, baked potatoes, salad, sliced pineapples, buns, milk.

SCIENCE IN YOUR LIFE

Most Common Cold

Nothing, it seems, is quite so demeaning as the common cold. Even the name of the disease suggests that uncommon people never get it, which of course is nonsense. As for the sneezing, dripping, bone-aching sufferer, the unfeeling spectator dismisses his ailment as of no real importance, and cartoonists make up jokes about it.

While it is true that nobody ever died of the common cold, a really heavy siege of this ancient affliction can make the victim feel sicker than many more serious diseases do. The fact is the degree of malaise that a sick man feels is often quite unrelated to the seriousness of his illness—and the virus of the common cold can produce more malaise per cubic inch in the human body than do many killers.

Luckily, in these days of new, effective drugs, the sufferer from the common cold is not entirely helpless. He can, for instance, clear out his stuffed nose most effectively with Tyzine, a clear solution which can be applied either by dropper or with an atomizer. In one recent test which lasted more than a year, over a thousand patients were treated in this way by a California physician, Dr. Jay G. Roberts. The results, Dr. Roberts reported, were "prompt and prolonged". A single application of the drug gave relief lasting from four to six hours, and produced no unwanted side-effects whatsoever.

Until an effective anti-cold vaccine is developed, sufferers will have to rely on relief of individual symptoms. Fortunately, these are becoming more and more effective as science learns more about cough, sneezing and pain.

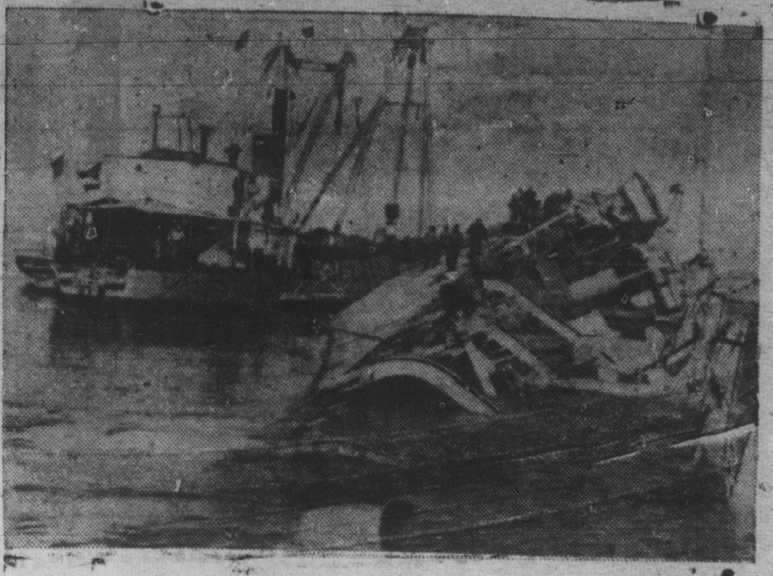
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THIS WEEK'S SAFETY MESSAGE
 By Cameron F. Moore, M. D.

The following is taken from "A Child's Safety Handbook", published by the New York City Department of Health:

Are Your Stairways Safe?
 Stairways are a special hazard. Gates on top and bottom will keep young children from falls down the stairs. All stairs should have hand-rails.

Never place a small rug at the top or foot of a flight of stairs. Keep the stairway well-lighted and in good repair. If carpeted, see that the carpeting is firmly tacked down and there are no rips or loose threads to catch the foot.



CLEAR CANAL . . . Crew of Italian salvage ship (left) false 5,000 ton Egyptian LST sunk in Suez canal during Anglo-French invasion.



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