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**"Let There Be Light"**

**A Thought for the Thoughtful**  
It is good to know; it is better to do; it is best to BE. To be pure and strong, to be honest and earnest, to be kindly and thoughtful, and in all to be true, to be manly and womanly. He can do more for others who has done most with himself.—S. D. Gordon.

**U. S. A. Looking at Japan**

The attention of the public at large remains focused on Europe's war—but the eyes of a good many experts are watching the Far East. For, these experts think, there is almost no possibility of our going to war in Europe in the near future. But there is a very definite possibility that we may engage in hostilities with Japan.

This government's attitude toward Nippon has been undergoing important changes. As the United States News puts it, "Attempted appeasement of the Japanese finally is ended. The United States, hereafter, will refuse to be frightened by statements out of Tokyo. Vital American interests in the Philippines and in the Dutch East Indies and British Malaya are not to be sacrificed without an effort to defend them. If Japan presses ahead with her present plans in the face of American opposition, she must expect war."

Japan means to dominate the Pacific. Her statesmen have said that all of Oceania must be brought within her sphere of influence. Some feel that, as an Axis partner, she intends to make an attempt on Singapore. She is a definite threat to Australia and New Zealand. She has outflanked the Philippines, and she is making angry faces at French Indo-China. And she threatens our supplies of rubber, tin and tea.

Evidence of Washington's stiffened House vote in favor of a measure to fortify Guam. Not long ago, a similar proposal was easily defeated. Japan has said that fortifying Guam would be a warlike act. Chief of Naval Operations Stark told Congress that Japanese objections should be "totally disregarded."

If we should go to war with Japan, it is clear that the campaign would have two phases, Japan is the weakest economically. She must import or die. And most of her imports come from us. We have embargoed sales to Japan of machine tools, aviation gasoline and some grades of scrap iron. But she has been buying increasing quantities of our crude oil, cotton, machinery, timber, and other commodities.

Second step in economic war against Japan, after the embargo, would be a boycott of imports. Japan's great cash crop is silk. We now buy three-quarters of all her silk production. If we refused to buy from her, her economy would be terribly shaken.

According to the U. S. News, if both Britain and the U. S. were to join in the embargo and the boycott, Japan would find that the source of 75 per cent of her vital supplies was closed to her, and that the market for 75 per cent of her produce was also gone.

It is apparent that the economic weapon could be used against Japan without formally going to war. However, the experts believe that this would simply make war inevitable, in that Japan would have to turn elsewhere for supplies and markets—and that she would have to use military force to get them. If, for instance, we refused to longer sell her oil, her logical move would be seizure of the oil-rich Dutch islands.

From the strictly military point of view, our naval authorities have good reason for believing we could defeat Japan in combat. Our fleet is larger, has greater fire power, and is considered far more efficient. Japanese cities are extraordinarily vulnerable to attack. Our fleet has the finest and largest carrier-based air force in existence. We could blockade Japan—but Japan could not blockade us. We could go on indefinitely without imports. Japan could not. And Japanese resources—and, some say, Japanese civilian morale—have been worn thin by the long-drawn-out war in China.

In the event of naval war with

Japan, it would be logical for us to use the British base at Singapore. Our own nearest major naval base, Pearl Harbor, is over 5,000 miles from Manila. The Manila base, Cavete, is not yet of formidable dimensions. It is considered certain that the British would welcome our fleet to Singapore with open arms.

Japan would go to war with us under heavy handicaps. That being true, would she take the chance of forcing us to fight? The answer to that is difficult. Eastern ways are not Western ways. Japanese samurai tradition is something that is utterly alien to us. A real Japanese thinks little of death and disaster—he prefers it to losing face. Some who have studied the Japanese character believe it not unlikely that Japan might attack us, even though she knew she was certain to lose, in a grand suicide gesture.

**How the Lend-Lease Bill Passed**

Weeks ago opponents of the lease-lend bill admitted that their cause was lost. From the beginning, it was a certainty that the bill would go through. And so, when an irritable, debate-weary Senate finally voted on the bill on the evening of March 8, it came almost as an anti-climax. There was no filibuster. There was no excitement. Congress simply gave its formal approval to a fateful, far-reaching policy which had been established and decided in all basic essentials long ago.

The bill passed with comparatively little change. It gives the President powers which can be compared only to those conferred on Wilson during the World War. He is, in short, empowered to sell, transfer title to, lease, lend or otherwise dispose of any and all war materials to any powers whose defense he considers vital to the defense of the United States. The Senate added three more or less important amendments, all of them approved by the White House. One ends the authority of the President to enter into contracts, on June 30, 1943, and stipulates that all contracts must be fulfilled by July 1, 1946. Another limits orders for war materials to amounts which will later be authorized by Congress, and adds a stipulation that not more than \$1,300,000 worth of war supplies now possessed by our Army and Navy can be transferred. The third requires the President to report to Congress on the progress of the program each 90 days.

Two much-publicized proposed amendments were beaten. One would have forbidden the President to allow the U. S. Navy to convoy supply ships abroad. As White House spokesmen pointed out, this meant little or nothing, inasmuch as the Constitution gives the President, as Commander-in-Chief of all the military forces, almost unlimited authority over naval actions and policy, and it would take a Constitutional amendment to change that. The other amendment would have forbidden sending an A. E. F. to foreign lands without explicit Congressional approval. Administration leaders said this would weaken our foreign policy, particularly in the Far East, by assuring our possible enemies that we would be unable to back up our talk with action. Congress concurred.

The vote did not divide strictly on party lines. The Democrats held their forces well in line—4 voted for the bill, and but 13 against. The Republicans split. Seventeen said no. Ten voted yes—including the party's Senate leader, McNary of Oregon.

It has been widely reported that Mr. Roosevelt was just waiting for Congress to finish its wrangling before taking drastic steps to iron out arms production difficulties. It is one thing to pass a law providing all-aid to England—it is a very different thing to produce and ship the arms the belligerents so desperately need. The defense high command has already been shaken up, but there is still considerable division of responsibility. No one man has been given supreme command, as was Bernard Baruch in the 1917 War Industries Board. The feeling persists that the President will be forced to do this before long.

**The Hickory Grove Low Down**

I been reading where there is talk about raising the speed limits to 65 per hour in California. It is now 45—just a snail's pace. They sure are slow folks, those Native Sons—only 45 miles—imagine.

But you stand along side a busy highway and you will see, at 45, how you will clutch at your old sky-pie. At 65, you would be as featherless as a chicken after a cyclone.

According to the new 1940 census they had a big increase in population in California. Maybe it is something like rabbits—you can have too many. With a 65 limit they may figure on solving their problem—automatic.

But we have been talking about it here at home and one of the boys, Clark, he says a fellow told him that this 65 idea is being sponsored by the coffin folks. But I don't know. It might be the tow car people, or it might even be the embalmers—you can't tell.

Yours with the low down,  
JO SERRA

**OUR DEMOCRACY**—by Mat  
**-AND STILL GROWING**

1782  
ALEXANDER HAMILTON...  
THE FIRST BANK...  
A HANDFUL OF DEPOSITORS.  
TODAY—15,000 BANKS HAVE  
45,000,000 SAVINGS ACCOUNTS ALONE.

THE FIRST U.S. LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY BEGAN IN PHILADELPHIA IN 1759. TODAY AMERICA HAS 306 COMPANIES, ALL REGULATED BY STATE LAW, AND 124 MILLION POLICIES IN FORCE.

THE FIRST ELECTRIC LIGHT BULB GLOWED FOR EDISON IN 1879. TODAY—MORE THAN 23 MILLION HOMES HAVE ELECTRICITY. THE USE OF CURRENT IS UP 73% IN 7 YEARS.

THE MOTOR CAR. FOUR REGISTERED IN 1895. 30 MILLION TODAY.

THE AIRPLANE...THE FIRST ONE TO FLY, 1903. 1000 A MONTH MADE HERE NOW, AND INCREASING EVERY DAY.

**"Through The Mill"**

Perhaps you often wonder why you do not get the "breaks"; Perhaps you feel discouraged when you think of your mistakes; Just tighten up the upper lip! Remember, Jack or Bill, It's only timber straight and sound, that passes through the mill.

You think, no doubt, your lot is hard; you seek for things in vain; Good timber must go through the mill to show its perfect grain. The log that never feels the bite of whirling teeth that sting Escapes a lot of pain, perhaps, but isn't worth a thing.

Why worry if the goal you seek seems very far away? Just plug along, and fine rewards will surely come some day; You'll find that life's a joyful thing and holds a lot of thrill; A timber takes no polish 'till it passes through the mill.

Be happy. You can "stand the gaff," and bide your time and wait, No timber passes through the mill unless it's strong and straight. The stick that has the twisted grain and makes the planer dull, Is cast aside as worthless, there's no value in the cull.

So "take the works" and like it, be you Harry, Tom or Bill, For even knots are polished when they go on through the mill; It hurts when your rough edges meet the steel revolving fast, But you'll be perfect timber when you're through the mill at last.

—Claude J. Smith  
Wells, Nevada

**Alleghany Album**

**23 Years Ago**  
[Yesterday a man came in the Star-Times office asking if we had a paper from the year 1918 carrying an advertisement for a particular land sale. One of the tattered and torn copies that we have been able to gather proved to contain the very ad he sought. So he secured a copy of the ad and we secured a subscriber. And here are some news items from the same old paper, The Alleghany Star, of January 18, 1918, edited by T. A. Wrench.]

The local Exemption Board is working hard on the classification of registrants, and to date has passed upon about 125, out of which number 45 have been placed in the first class. It is expected that Alleghany's next quota will be taken care of in the first class.

Tom Carson arrived in France during December. He is connected with the Aviation Corps.

Dr. J. L. Doughton returned from Lenoir on Monday night where he had been summoned on account of the illness of his daughter, Miss Mattie Read.

News was received on Wednesday morning of the death in Johnson City, Tenn. of Mrs. Bertie Edwards, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Hawthorne and niece of Mrs. R. A. Doughton. Her death comes as a great shock to her wide circle of friends in Alleghany County.

T. J. Carson has found it impossible, because of his excessive work in the bank, to act as a member of the committee on sale of War Savings Stamps, and D. C. Duncan has been appointed as the member from Gap Civil.

From Scottville—Estel McGrady, who has been working at Independence, Colorado, for quite a while, passed here last week enroute to his home at Furches.

From Piney Creek—Walter Halsey from the West spent Christmas with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Eli Halsey.

From Stratford—W. M. Irwin

**SCOUT NEWS**  
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

**Be Prepared**

"It is the responsibility of every one identified with Scouting in normal times, and certainly in a period of national emergency, to be alert and vigilant to meet every opportunity for service, not only because of the obligation, but because of the special training which the program of Scouting gives to boys in Patrols and Troops and through the development of qualities of leadership on the part of older boys and Scouters. All that we have should be mobilized, energized and specially trained in order that we may be prepared to make our contribution to vitalize, invigorate and strengthen Democracy, and to render such service as may properly be expected of boys of Scout age," writes Dr. James E. West in BOYS' LIFE.

A driver is no safer than his most careless act.

**Touring the Good Old U. S. A.**

**From Chicago To Sparta**  
(concluded)  
by Sally Bledsoe

After absorbing many interesting facts about this big city of Chicago, and all in such a limited time, and after spending some hours in sightseeing and widow-wishing, well, I was about exhausted, and realizing I had no shoulder to cry on and none to kiss me good-bye I made my way back to the bus terminal. By a split second I was able to catch a bus for Indianapolis. My exhaustion together with the steady droning of the wind and the wheels brought drowsiness, and soon I was asleep. And sleep I did, for there's a great gap in my memory of places and things far out from Chicago. The last thing I remember before my lapse was that our bus pulled onto a main thoroughfare and joined a long black trail of traffic.

For some reason riding alone on a bus day after day does not seem monotonous. Time does not drag, and neither do the miles which disappear astonishingly fast.

The rest of the way home was the most uninteresting of my entire trip, except for one highlight at Cincinnati, where I attended a good show from nine to eleven. I had evolved a routine of rest stops, where I'd stretch my tired muscles for ten-minute intervals, catch a nap or talk with my seat companion; but most of my time was spent after Cincinnati in reminiscence of my three months' vacation, because I was only mildly interested in the rugged scenery of West Virginia—having seen it many times before. Nevertheless the state is a diamond in the rough. It holds all the advantages when it comes to natural resources for our national defense, such as minerals, etc.

Delving into the storehouse of memory of the things I saw, and to think of the amazing attractions there are to be seen in these wonderful United States, is it foolish to want to make one's hobby the seeing of America first? It contains such things as Niagara Falls, the Great Lakes, Chicago's Merchandise Mart, Museum, Aquarium, and Planetarium, the Black Hills, Bad Lands, Yellowstone Park, Mt. Rainier, the Giant Redwood Forest (the oldest living things on earth), San Francisco, Nob Hill, the World's Two Largest Bridges—Golden Gate and Oakland Bay, Chinatown, Fisherman's Wharf, Hollywood Bowl, Santa Anita Race Track, Grauman Chinese Theatre, San Gabriel Mission, Forest Lawn Cemetery, Wee Kirk of the Heather, Oil Fields, Ranches, Citrus Groves, Wheat Fields, Giant Cacti and hundred of species of the desert, Death Valley, vast plains, majestic mountains and forests, Boulder Dam, Grand Canyon, Pinedale Forest, Pikes Peak, Painted Desert, Rio Grande Valley, The Alamo at San Antonio, the majestic Rockies, Mississippi River, New Orleans, Old Market, Mansions of the old South, Swanee River, Tamiami Trail, Bok Tower, St. Augustine and Fort Marion Dungeon, and Marineland Studio. In fact we have everything that nature and man can provide. And I am happy and thankful that my 8,500 miles were colorful, interesting, and every mile worth while. And I shall have to quote again, the proverbial expression, when one is seeing the Grand Canyon for the first time, "It is impossible to describe, you'll just have to see it for yourself."

Word are, of course, the most powerful drug used by mankind.—Kipling.

**GERMANY**

Very small straws can show which way the wind blows, and when Adolph Hitler makes a 13-minute speech, as he did last Sunday, people may naturally wonder if the supply of big words is running low. Of course he was full of assurance that German might was poised, all ready for the victorious blow that will mean victory in 1941, beyond any shadow of doubt. Fine words! And now Germany is ready to take over a full share of the fighting which the Italian forces have been carrying. And how they have carried it! The only front on which the Axis powers seem to have the real advantage is on the talk front.

**ITALY**

Poor old Mussolini seems to go from bad to worse. His troops in Africa have been whipped off the map as far as effective warfare is concerned. In Albania his forces have not been able to do one thing worth writing home about. And so Benito, "in person," went to Albania to help "put it over." And the result? Reports are that Mussolini himself has gone back to Rome from the Albanian front with his prestige weakened and his authority shaken. Doubtless.

**BRITAIN**

While England suffers considerably from the air raids and the ship sinkings, yet the spirit of the British empire is keen to go on and on to a finish. Air pilots are impatient to be allowed more opportunities at the enemy. Australian troops cannot be content until they have a chance to smash into some of the famed might of the axis powers. Britain appears to be almost begging Hitler to a fight in the Balkans. They have him about completely bluffed out of an attempt at invading England. Britain seems to be on the aggressive everywhere, and seems to give Hitler no time to decide just where he better strike for his famous promised victory. Thousands upon thousands of British troops are landing in Greece, and that is not merely for display, nor to strengthen the morale of defeated forces. But it does make any move for Hitler very risky.

**THE U. S. A.**

With the lease-lend bill passed, the United States is moving every day toward the giving of more and more aid to Britain and Greece and China. And, when the United States supplies the effective materials with which war is waged to one side in a struggle, the other side will not consider the United State a neutral power. Nearer and nearer we come to being in the war, and some say we should have been in long ago. The fact is that President Roosevelt's speech last Saturday night gave great encouragement to all those nations with a mind to resist the axis powers.

Safety is good for life.

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**Clifton Evans, JEWELER**  
Joines Barber Shop

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