

TABLE TALK

AND now—divorce is outstripping marriage. Recent reports from the Census Bureau show that while marriage is increasing at the rate of 1.2 per cent, divorces are increasing 3.1 per cent.

But really now, is there any reason to be disturbed at these figures? Isn't divorce merely another natural phenomenon, one of the many parasitic evils that are constantly attacking a living organism—in this case, marriage? If the concept of marriage is tenable, healthy, it will survive. If it is weak, outworn and essentially *untrue* for this age, it will be destroyed in the struggle for social existence. Marriage can claim no exemption from evolutionary laws. Whether it survives or perishes depends wholly upon its power of adaptability to new conditions, the chief of which is the economic independence of the modern woman. But whether marriage stands or falls, it will be interesting to watch the imminent conflict—a conflict that can no more be prevented than the erosion of mountain peaks or the recurrence of the aurora borealis.



“AVIGATION,” the newest of air words, is the science of determining one's position in the air by means of the stars and sun. But more than that, it is a perfect example of flexibility in a living language. “Navigation of the air,” the obvious root of the new word, was cumbersome and unwieldy. So to speed up the notion, some one hyphenated the words into the handier compound “air-navigation.” Finally, some genius saw a legitimate new word concealed in the kernel of an old one, stripped away all superfluities, and “avigation” leaped forth to become a compact, philologically justifiable word for a new and very real thing.



AT the cost of five cents a day, all employees of the General Motors Corporation will have a two thousand dollar life-insurance and accident benefits of fifteen dollars a week. More than 200,000 workers are thus insured for a total of four billion dollars. The insurance is issued without medical examination, is extended to all employees without regard to age, and permits even those who are physically impaired to share in the benefits. The plan is coöperative; that is, the Corporation and the employee share in the payment of the premiums.

Good business. Good for the life-insurance company, the employer and the employee. Group insurance is something that benefits every one, and taxes no one unduly. It is a step nearer to the peaceful relation of those old cartoon antagonists Capital and Labor, who seem to be meeting oftener these days around the polished council table than in the deadly grapple of the strike.

MUSIC and still more music, has been the cry of most great educators since the time of Plato. In Book III of "The Republic," Socrates is outlining to Glaucon the essentials of the true education, and after summarizing the differences between good and bad music, Socrates says:

"We attach such supreme importance to a musical education because rhythm and harmony sink most deeply into the recesses of the soul and take most powerful hold of it, bringing gracefulness in their train, and making a man graceful if he be rightly nurtured in them. And he that has been duly nurtured therein will have the keenest eye for defects, whether in art or nature, and feeling a most just disdain for them, will commend beautiful objects, which he will gladly receive into his soul and grow to be noble and good. . . . For I believe, Glaucon, that music ought to end in the love of the beautiful."

The modern exponent of this viewpoint is John Erskine, poet, musician, novelist and educator. As president of the Juilliard School of Music he is advancing the idea that music in high schools and colleges should receive recognition equal to that granted history, mathematics or literature. No nation is ultimately happy, he contends, unless each individual in it has an opportunity to study the art of music.

Not a new idea, but a grand one. Not a revolutionary experiment, but like most other great advances, John Erskine's theory of music in American life is a harmonious blending of past truths with present needs.



SECRETARY KELLOGG's name is a red flag in certain "liberal" quarters, and it has been the fashion, until quite recently, to belabor him for his conduct of affairs with Nicaragua and Mexico. But it is not unlikely that the name of Frank B. Kellogg, having outlived the shafts of contemporary journalism, will be written into the record as one of the great peacemakers of history.

Under the terms of the Kellogg treaty, the six high contracting powers (England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States) agree "in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of policy in their relations with one another."

Will the Kellogg treaty turn out to be another empty tabernacle of peace, another scrap of paper to be violated when the critical moment ticks some fevered nation into a war of aggression? Certainly, the treaty is so hedged about by interpretations and moral reservations as to make it extremely difficult to hold the contracting powers to anything specific. But the main clause is optimistic,

and the spirit of the treaty is leveled dead against the idea of war. Frank Kellogg may have built a real temple of peace, or he may have only added another brick to the substructure of that grand edifice.



GENE TUNNEY, strangest of prize-fighting champions, seems to have more than a professional interest in physical condition. His desire for bodily perfection is a constant life-motive, approaching the stoicism of those fine temperate philosophers who lived far from the prize-ring. Tunney's utterances are astounding revelations of self-dedication to an ideal. "I conserved energy four years in order to win the title from Dempsey," he says, and then proceeds to explain what he means by conserving energy. "I spent most of my time alone, not frittering away my nervous strength in useless social chatter. I ate sparingly, and only twice a day, of foods that I knew agreed with me. I never drank tea, coffee or alcohol, and [strangest of all] I never allowed myself to get tired from physical exercise."

One may not approve Tunney's late profession, but one has to admire the wisdom of his training program. To speak exactly, Tunney never "trains"; instead, he arranges his food, sleep and work so as to be constantly in the pink of condition. Pugilism is by no means the noblest of vocations, but many a man whose work is theoretically loftier than Tunney's could check the process of flabby deterioration by culling a leaf or two from the champion's "Book of Hours."



THERE can be no academic independence in this or any country until a strongly organized union of college professors challenges the present dictatorship of the Board of Trustees—or, in the case of State universities, the State legislatures.

Salary, choice of curriculums, independence in matters of speech and written expression of opinion—these are some of the fields in which college professors have no liberty. As isolated individuals they have no tangible power of any kind. We await the day when an Academic Manifesto, beginning "Teachers of the World, Unite!" is nailed to the doors of every Trustee Chamber in the country. Until college teachers are banded together in a protective union, there can be no hope for academic freedom or educational progress.



DURING those long, lonely winter evenings in a million homes situated twenty miles off the main traveled roads, what book is most diligently thumbed, what pages most breathlessly turned?

Not the Bible, not "Pilgrim's Progress," nor even the latest "Tarzan," or "Shepherd of the Hills." These volumes may claim huge constituencies (though the glory of Bunyan's sun has probably set), but no book of the present day can boast a following as large as the constant readers of the Mail Order Catalogue.

In many a home where no other literature has ever entered, the Mail Order Catalogue is standard reading. And no magic carpet ever wafted its owner to happier scenes than the thick richly colored Catalogue. For the women (fewer nowadays) whose trips to the county-seat are lifetime memories, the Catalogue brings a complete fashion-show, Paris styled yet priced for modest purses. For the farmer and mechanic, the pictured tools, paint, implements and gear are seductive temptations, too potent and varied for long resistance. Yet when the Mail Order package is opened, it proves to be one of the few things in life that is actually as good as we hoped it would be.

The doctrine of "satisfy the customer" gives the Mail Order Catalogue a cumulative prestige in rural communities. Incidentally, the Catalogue is the most expensive book published in America. One Company spends a million a year on its thousand-page beauty, and then distributes it free. It would seem that the spread of chain dry-goods stores and the development of inland roads should have pared away the Catalogue's mailing-list. But they haven't. There is enough vitality and charm about the Catalogue to prolong its life indefinitely as a serviceable, characteristically American institution.



INDIAN meal, venison, rum and molasses, used to be the dietary staples of America, and jolly fine staples they were, too. But like all other good things they came to an end, and their places have been taken by meaner forms of provender—among which "hot-dogs" seem dearest to the proletarian palate. If the hot-dogs consumed annually in America were laid link to link, they would reach from here to Saturn, strangle that dignified old planet with a double loop, and come back to girdle the United States with a dangling fringe of wieners.

Food in uglier form was never invented; delicacy in consuming this alleged food is impossible. The ghastliest picture of our fellow man that we wish to contemplate is the spectacle of a perspiring burgher with a hot-dog in one hand and a bottle of sickly green "tonic," in the other, wolfing the wiener and washing it down with a draught of colored water.

Hot-dogs may be both nourishing and palatable. But as George Santayana said of the Dolly Sisters after watching them dance, "Their charm eludes me."

INDUSTRY MARCHES ON

It Pays to Coöperate with the Man in the Shop

ROSE C. FELD

MYTHS DIE exceeding hard. For many years it has been implicitly believed that English labor reform is far superior to American. Young American intellectuals whose favorite pastime is decrying everything native and sanctifying everything foreign have succeeded in no small measure in foisting this belief upon the American mind. They point to well-known figures in English labor, Beatrice and Sidney Webb, Ramsay MacDonald, and ask with appropriate gesture, what have we to equal them. In a way, they are right. From the standpoint of intellectual attainment and expression, our labor leaders cannot rank with the English. Certainly the late Samuel Gompers, for example, was not of the stature of the English reformers, who are often men of cultural inheritance and sometimes gifted in a literary way.

Yet it cannot be said that American industry has suffered for its lack of Webbs and MacDonalds. American industry does not depend upon labor leaders for its self-expression. The thing boils down to a question of differences in temperament and tradition. The English worker apparently is satisfied with a consciousness of able and superior leadership; the American worker—and

he is a distinct being in spite of varying backgrounds—demands more. He is an individual in his own right. He wants results, and he wants them at once. Economic laws and theories propounded by his intellectual superiors interest him less than his actual wage, his working conditions, his home and his children. Because of this and because of the fact that the heads of many American industries are directly descended from the labor ranks, reform or progress or evolution, call it what you will, has been along *industrial* lines rather than *labor*. There is a distinction between the two. The English labor leader will write a brilliant treatise on the relation of environment to outlook; American industry, less literary, less introspective, writes nothing but inaugurates a program of safety and health in its factories and provides homes for workers and their families. From there it goes on to other reforms, many of which, it should be admitted, were born in the minds of English labor, but have achieved very little growth on English soil.

It seems to be the fashion to scoff at the things with which the American worker is satisfied. Baths, sanitary plumbing, individual homes, automobiles, garages, radios, movies.