

Transports O' Joy

By T-Bone Slim

What I miss mostly, and muchly, in this salubrious or lugubrious North Dakota is an automobile. Not having one is drawback, may I say, and seems actually to prevent me from making highly desired progress or headway—another thing, the possession of one would enable me while working on the farms to slip to town of an evening and purchase a meal now and then, to kind of eke out a supplement to the well intended provisions the kindly farmer bestows upon me.

But that is not all, a car is not enough—a man needs an airplane.

The other day I saw an airplane flying low over the farm and rightly I concluded the airman was looking for a job, shocking or threshing. Of course, I don't know how the scheme is arranged but I surmise when a farmer needs a hand he puts a red hat on his head like deer hunters do and when the flock of flyers behold the red cap they can make up their minds the wearer is either an employer or a cardinal. The red hat would be an ideal arrangement in town also since, then, the innocent spectators would have advance notice of their danger, have time to hide away until the farmer went back home to have a snack of summer sausage—it wouldn't be long . . .

Well, such is life, man wants and wants. First the learning of a few steps in the time honored art of walking, then roller skates, then a bicycle, then a freight train, a lizzie and now, gosh dang it, we simply must have an airplane—you'll notice I didn't mention swimming, rafts, skiffs, dories, yawls, yachts or Leviathans of the deep; that would be coming in bad faith from a header-barge captain—said barge, too, being a stage in the evolution of transportation, a thing that has developed so fast that our purchasing power fell by the wayside exhausted, hopelessly beaten from the very start. Please remember that even walking as a means of transportation was an established fact long before old Abe Lincoln was crucified and made Pullman porters of Afro-Americans. Indeed, even for that crude means of travel, we came late and learned to walk only to find our neighbors buzzing by on wheels or skis—and since then we have been behind time. Transportation has travelled so fast that we've been left at the post—yes, and the nerve of them, magnificent guts, I should say, to periodically fasten to a man's leg a ball and chain. Bah! Could anything be more ridiculous? The man's 'way behind schedule as it is: without an anchor tied to his propellers.

But, gentlemen, as slow as we are, behind time, schedule and in our appointments, we're 'way ahead of the schedule of wages—one would almost think wages was afoot with both legs broken (above the knees) or creeping along in a four-wheel-brake case of infantile paralysis. Now the trick is how to drain "the paralysis" from poor wages or how to put a couple of good legs under it.

I wonder if organizing for that purpose would do any good—seeing as how we ain't going anywhere until wages are first put on its feet, so that, instead of saying "what are they paying around here" we would be able to guess just exactly the proportions of the money involved—organize to the point where frustrations would play but a minor key in the grand symphony of happy and contended labor, eliminating petty contentions to the realm of "used to be."

Our battle is with frustrations; and if leadership, absolute mental monarchy or monopoly of intelligence, be good then co-operation as between many is a failure—a thing which our institutions of learning (schools) tend to disprove—for why educate the many if one person is all that's required to transform a lost cause into a howling success? Be it understood, though followers may be ever so willing (heroic yes-men), the very crudest orders are not carried out satisfactory to the "brains"—yon employing despot—and if money won't move them what shall we try? Love? Patriotism? Altruism? Religion? Fear? . . .

Or shall we flatter them?

I wonder how personal initiative of many in co-operation would work—it being figured that a team of two horses can pull more than two single horses and hold back more than two single horses—this latter they accomplish by leaning one against the other.

Why, then, cannot two horn-headed intellectuals generate an energy superior to the pair of 'em

even as aforesaid jackasses do on a downgrade—by leaning one against the other? Can it be they fear to louse up each other by rubbing shoulders?