Preface: The Emerging of Owen D. Young

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PREFACE

THE EMERGING OF OWEN D. YOUNG

Nothing more exciting comes to a country like ours than the emergence of a man from the mass of us to a place where the public begins to say, "Keep your eye on him. He looks like a leader." It is like watching an unknown ship come out of the fog into the full light of sunshine where she can be examined, rated, approved - or disapproved.

In the last ten years the country has had one authentic experience of that kind - a man coming to be generally recognized as possessing unusual gifts of leadership and the recognition coming by a road not cut out by organized road builders. The man is Owen D. Young.

There is no doubt that he has arrived. Nevertheless the arrival is a bewilderment to many. How did he get here? Where did he come from? What are his credentials?

The answers are more difficult because he is so hard to classify. All those who are not happy - and there are many - unless they have each of us in a niche and properly labelled scratch their heads when they seek to pigeon-hole him.

Big business? Yes, very big business, the Chairman of the Board of one of the greatest corporations in the country - the General Electric - an officer or director in a dozen foreign and domestic companies.
Politician? No, though the politicians cannot keep their eyes off him. If he is one it is a brand unfamiliar in this land.

Educator? Yes, emphatically - a teacher - one great enough to stimulate youth wherever he touches it and to seek, not shirk, opportunities to use his gift.

Farmer? Oh, yes - a farmer born who has never given up his trade - who is no "up" in it today that I have known of his putting an Arizona cow boy to shame in guessing the weight of steers.

Progressive? All of those in the progressive pigeon-holes stick out their heads to shout, "No, Water Power."

Conservative? No - at his very name shivers run down the backs of every "sit tight" group in the country. "Has ideas," they shout - "and more dangerous still - talks them."

But if the man cannot be classified how has he come to occupy so large a place in the mind of the general public?