

## Topics of The Times

Hero prizes in civic life are  
**Into** nearly always bestowed for  
**the** valor in saving other people.  
**Clear** President Roosevelt day be-  
fore yesterday presented a  
medal to a Westchester lad of 14 for  
valor displayed in saving his own life.  
He is the boy who got lost in the Maine  
woods last Summer for seven days and  
came out alive by use of his Boy Scout  
knowledge and sheer pluck.

Chiefly, of course, it was pluck. Not  
all the woodsman lore in the world  
would have saved young Donn Fendler  
if at the end of the second day, let us  
say, he had lost heart and given himself  
up for doomed. This he did not do. For  
seven long days he refused to think of  
himself as a literally lost member of the  
young generation.

He did not sit down on the  
**The** nearest rock or log to enu-  
**Way** merate the faults committed  
**Out** by the older generation in  
bringing him to his present  
plight. He did not surrender to the  
bleak conclusion that for him in that  
tangled wildwood there was no more  
hope of open horizons, of opportunities,  
of goals and causes. He did not sub-  
scribe to the all too popular youth doc-  
trine that for youth today the comedy is  
finished and the rest is silence.

His example is a reminder that we  
have been saying too much about what  
the elders have done or have not done  
to the younger generation. We are not  
saying enough about what youth can do  
for itself. Youth can do a great deal to  
find its way out of the woods—by re-  
maining young, by refusing to listen to  
the synthetic despairs of its elders.

The more one reads and  
**Two** hears of the new automo-  
**Opposite** biles, the more a person is  
**Trends** impressed by their extraor-  
dinary difference from the  
New Deal. The automotive engineers  
have been working for nearly a quarter  
of a century to make life simpler and  
the efforts of the New Deal have been  
directed to making life more complex.

The motor manufacturers, to be sure,  
are no enemies of innovation. The an-  
nual models bristle with new features,  
and there have been occasions when  
progress verged on gadgetry. But the  
cigarette lighters and powder boxes and  
flower vases are not of the essence of  
the automobile. In its basic function  
the automobile has been growing more  
and more simple. It is an incomparably  
easier vehicle to drive now than it was  
in the primeval days when people started  
the engine by turning a crank handle in  
front. Today the whole problem of the  
shifting gears seems about to be liq-  
uidated. The driver's functions are  
limited to starting, steering and stop-  
ping.

With this simplification of  
**Many** life in the driver's seat of  
**New** an automobile compare what  
**Levers** has been going on in the  
governance of the American  
people from Washington. Automotive  
design has been discarding the crank  
handles and the clutches and the brake  
levers and the gear levers and has been  
concentrating all its agencies within a  
few inches of space in the vicinity of  
the steering wheel and shaft, but the  
public life of the American people has  
proliferated new indispensable levers  
and wheels and gears and cams and  
springs without which the machine of  
our economic and social life cannot move  
and cannot be steered.

If the automobile manufacturers every  
year came out with more brakes instead  
of less and called them SEC and TNEC  
and NLRB, and with two clutches in-  
stead of one and called them RFC and  
TVA, and with five gear-shifts instead  
of the classic three and designated them  
by a corresponding number of alphabet  
labels, it would be very much like what  
has been going on in American govern-  
ment.

The automobile driv-  
**One** er's task is growing  
**Resemblance** easier to the point of  
**Holds** automatism, but the  
number of ingenious  
devices which American industry and  
American labor and American life in  
general must watch keeps growing.

In only one respect does the future  
course of automobile design and of gov-  
ernmental evolution promise to main-  
tain an important resemblance. It is  
too much to hope that the automobile  
engineers who have abolished so many  
operating parts in the car will ever with  
all their ingenuity succeed in abolishing  
the monthly installments. The simple  
new car, like the complicated machinery  
at Washington, will have to be paid for.