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We seek truth, that we may follow it.

MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 1938

As the Twig Was Bent

The Government's victory in the case against sixteen major oil companies and thirty leading oil men is in all respects a serious business. Sentences are yet to be passed, but the corporations face fines of up to $5,000 each, and the individuals may be plopped into jail for as much as a year. Indeed, some of the wives of the defendant officers came weeping to their sides in the best courtroom manner when they heard the foreman of the Federal jury pronounce the awful word, Guilty.

Well they might weep, for this is a criminal, not a civil, action that the Government has won. And yet there's something contradictory about it, something half-hearted in the Government's belated decision to prosecute. For what these oil companies did in violation of the anti-trust acts was precisely what they had been accustomed to doing with Federal sanction under NRA. Secretary Ickes administered the oil code in such a way as to assure minimum prices for producers in the field, which inevitably called for price-fixing among the distributors. Their plea that Mr. Ickes taught them the trick may have no standing in law, but actually it lessens the degree of their iniquity, and lends some credence to the defense that they were victims of the administration's inability to make up its mind between busting or blessing trusts.

Anyhow, They Fought

The morning papers carried an Associated Press dispatch from Hendaye, France, to the effect that Spanish Government sources report that yesterday at Teruel an American battalion wiped out two squadrons of Franco's Moors. And this afternoon we are publishing an Associated Press dispatch from Perpignan, France, which has it that, according to Insurgent sources, yesterday at Teruel two squadrons of Franco's Moors wiped out an American battalion.

From which we deduce at least this certainty—that yesterday at Teruel Americans were industriously trying to kill Moors and that Moors were industriously trying to kill Americans.

Is the United States, then, at war with Morocco? If so, Dr. Cordell Hull has been very quiet about it. Or do Americans particularly dislike Moors, and Moors particularly dislike Americans? We had not heard of it. Ah, but the Americans and Moors pant with love for Spain, then? It seems, somehow, a little doubtful. Wherefore, how came it about, then, that yesterday Americans were trying to kill Moors and Moors were trying to kill Americans? Why, as nearly as we can find out, through a sword and money. The Americans are fighting in Spain for a word, democracy. And the Moors, according to the best reports, are fighting because Franco or Mussolini or somebody pays 'em to fight.

They'll Go

We trust that the doctors of Burke County did not quite mean it when, the other day, apparently taking their cue from a doctor out West, they got together and decided to blacklist everybody who was in arrears with any of them, to attend those blacklisted only for cash on the nail and in all labor cases whatever to require payment in advance.

We can imagine that it is highly annoying to have to roll out of the hay at two o'clock in the morning to [illegible] whose ailments [illegible] when in fact plainly could pay. But there is a very great difference between the dead beats and those who really cannot pay — and we hope the Burke doctors have not forgotten that difference.

Else they will be making medicine into a mere business — and a particularly hardboiled kind of business. For 2,500 years medicine has not been primarily a business in the western world. And if the doctors forget that tradition, they will be surrendering precisely the thing which made Robert Louis Stevenson say once that doctors were the only body of men on earth who were almost invariably admirable.

But of course they won't, these doctors in Burke. They are merely expressing helplessly their resentment of patients who don't pay. When Mrs. Indigent Hillsman goes into labor again, and the call comes for a doctor, it will be answered; and we'll bet the doctor's uncollectible fee on that.

Why, the Old Walrus!

There are times when we suspect that what old Henry Mencken used often to argue, to the great scandal of the more solemn variety of patriots, is so — and that this actually is the funniest country on earth.

What moves us to the reflection at the moment is the fact that we have just discovered, in a list of salaries paid to prominent newspaper men published by *Editor and Publisher*, that Heywood Broun, the gentleman who performs in a column to lee'ards, draws down $37,200 per annum!

What is funny about that, of course, is that Heywood, in his utterances, is one of these here radicals. There was a time, indeed, when he might have been called a Red, the time when for a while he was a member of the Communist Party of America, but probably Heywood never was really a Red. He is plainly and incurably a maverick, and Reds are all sheep — or parrots. Anyhow, they all say exactly the same things in exactly the same way. But pink in his utterances Heywood undoubtedly is. To put it mildly, he says, capitalism is lousy.

Yet, by the current tests, and by tests that Heywood himself has often laid down, that salary plainly makes him an Economic Royalist. Wherefore, we have the paradox of an Economic Royalist daily spouting pink opinions! But an even greater paradox than that is the fact that the people who pay that salary are a highly capitalistic chain of newspapers, a highly capitalistic syndicate, and any number of highly capitalistic newspapers which buy Mr. Broun's column. In short, we have the spectacle of a highly capitalistic press paying an Economic Royalist to write daily pieces giving capitalism hell!

No doubt of it. It is the funniest country on earth. But not even Heywood will deny that, by the same token, it is a most pleasant one in which to live.

A Distinguished Visitor

It is going to fall to Cameron Morrison to introduce Dr. John R. Mott, the YMCA's speaker of Tuesday evening, to his audience, and while our distinguished former Governor is thoroughly at home in such a role, we wonder if he appreciates the size and the difficulties of the undertaking. Dr. Mott is the sort of person one could more easily write a book about than portray adequately in the time allotted for an introduction. In fact, a book has been written about him, and it ran to 461 printed pages.

In the more than seventy years since he was born, Dr. Mott has been indefatigable. Though a queasy traveler, he has been nearly 2,000,000 miles, touching almost every spot, no matter how outlandish, on the globe. And though the variety of his interests is great, and though he has been offered academic and political posts of preferment, the central theme of his life remains, as it became during his college days, the extension and the consolidation of the Christian religion. He is to Christianity much as Norman H. Davis is to the United States Government — ambassador to the world. And he has done as much, undoubtedly, as any contemporary person in spreading the doctrine with which he has bound up his life.

Signs in the Heavens

In addition to the uneasiness caused by the proximity of the volcano (Mauna Loa, in connection with yesterday's earthquake), Hawaii island residents reported seeing a big meteor fell.

We might smile at that. The fall of a big meteor is an explicable enough happening, as explicability goes in this amazing world in which we have our being, and is likely to hurt no one. And yet if we smile at the Hawaiians we shall only be smiling at the whole human race. When men feel that they are dwelling over imminent disaster, they everywhere fall into the state of mind where natural phenomena become ominous portents.

So early as 1833, when the stars fell over the Southern states — when there took place, that is, one of those great periodical meteor showers which are well known to astronomers — many pulpits and editorial sanctums, and not all of them low-placed, saw it as a certain sign of coming war between the North and South. And when, in the '30's, Donati's great comet burned through the heavens, the verdict that it portended such a war was almost universal. As in the early days of Reconstruction, the falling in some parts of Dixie of "bloody snow" — that is, snow laden with red dust from the upper atmosphere — was widely seen as ground for terror and gloom.

And before we smile too much at the Hawaiians, we shall have to remember that Mauna Loa is one of the greatest and most dangerous of Pacific volcanos — as great and as dangerous, perhaps, as was Krakatao in Sunda Straits, which in 1883 killed 120,000 people.

A COLUMNIST ON HIS KIND

By HOOD & JOHNSON

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA.—This is a piece about my colleagues — the columnists. Westbrook Pegler said not long ago that it is a frightful piece of brass even to hold out to be one of

what the Gridiron Club satirized as the Seven Pillars of Wisdom, and I agreed with him.

But, on second thought, I dunno. In my own work of attempting to study and digest the torrent of news that streams across the ticker, a short cut is the columnists. I try to keep myself informed directly but I must confess I read them all.

Godfrey Nelson has a piece on Mr. Vinson's report on revising the undistributed profits tax. It is a terribly complex report. I know that he has sweated for hours to simplify it. That, checked against my own dope, saves hours for me.

Some columnists are intimates and advocates of the Third New Deal. I find difficulty in agreeing with much that Mr. Jay Franklin says, but I know his contacts. If I want to guess what new white rabbit is being prepared in the pinkest purlieus of Washington, I feel pretty sure that Mr. Franklin's writings reflect it.

La Thompson Mirrors The Macaulays

If I am a long way from New York and haven't had a chance to see how the modern Lord Macaulays and economic royalists are taking it, it is easy to supply the lack by reading Dorothy Thompson.

A painstaking analyst with a slightly royalist slant on every development, is David Lawrence. The columnist with perhaps the most complete background of political memories with which to measure new developments is Mark Sullivan. He has set a lot of it down in his history of our times, which I frequently consult in seeking sources or parallels of day-to-day developments. He has them at his finger tips.

Walter Lippmann and I don't seem to get along very well in mutual references, but his is the most careful philosophical comment on the passing show and that is necessary to a balanced view.

Among the best listeners in the Washington whispering gallery of rumor or better, are Drew Pearson and Bobbie Allen. While the "grape vines" don't always register right, these gossip-gleaners dig up a surprising lot of correct undercover dope.

Another columnist who also wears out a lot of conscientious reportorial shoeleather and whose stuff is just about the most accurate of its kind is Paul Mallon. Franklyn Waltman's stuff isn't syndicated but it ought to be. Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner team up to do the same sort of bright but painstaking sifting job.

And Heywood Writes Best Of The Lot

About the most engaging writer of all, when he wants to be, is Heywood Broun. He can be exactly as engaging about nothing whatever as about something important.

Arthur Krock is more of an editor than a columnist. I can't afford to miss a piece of his because he rarely writes without a background of absolutely accurate knowledge and he is the most careful and craftsmanlike chef in the whole kitchen.

I read several others which I can't afford to miss, like Raymond Clapper's column, and straight reporters who add a dash of editorial writing, like Turner Catledge and Tom Stokes. Eleanor Roosevelt rarely risks political comment but many of her paragraphs have proved highly revealing. To my mind the cream of the class are Westbrook Pegler and Frank Kent — Peg on every subject under the sun and Frank on politics.

The whole bunch, taken together, represent a group of painstakingly informed opinions from almost every conceivable angle. When you have read them all, you may not flush the envy of truth, but you certainly have covered the pasture with about a dozen of the busiest bird dogs in any man's hunting preserves.

Queens Road Needs Paving Most Of All

Beautifying Park Strip Is Fine But Pressing Utilitarian Needs Should Be First.

Dear Sir:

I read with interest in a recent issue of your paper the plans that are being made for the beautification of the park strip of Queens Road, now that the street cars have been superseded by modern busses.

This, of course, is a splendid idea, and I hope that it can be carried out. However, it appears to me that the repaving of Queens Road, one of Charlotte's most beautiful residential streets, is of far greater importance than the beautification of the park strip.

As everyone who has ever traveled this street knows, the traffic lanes on either side of the now-abandoned street car line are far too narrow, so narrow, in fact, that, once behind a slow-moving vehicle, it is almost impossible for a driver to pass it. The pavement itself is full of holes and ridges and both the car and the driver are given a good shakingup at speeds over 20 miles per hour.

Before spending money and time in beautifying the parkway, I wonder if it would not be wise to first repave the street, and, while doing so, take a goodsize slice from each side of the park strip and add it to the traffic lanes. This repaving and widening of the lanes would in itself be a big step toward beautifying the entire street.

TAXPAYER.

Charlotte.

THAT VIRGINIA BILL TO FINE PARKED LOVERS IS UPHELD AS A GOOD ONE

Dear Sir:

In Saturday's News I read a letter from some local person who signed himself "Still Young" and derided the efforts of Dr. Thomas Ely of Jonesboro, Virginia, who is trying to pass a law through the Virginia legislature making it unlawful for unmarried couples to park outside the city limits.

In the first place, I am disagreeably astonished to know that you would entertain such a letter. I am equally disgusted to know that one of our young men (or possibly, our young women!) would voice such an opinion in a newspaper that will be read by other young people.

I believe Dr. Ely's proposal is a good thing, and I am sure that the passing of such a law would be of enormous value to the people of Virginia. It would serve, you must agree, to put an end to this disgusting promiscuous love-making on our public highways. And these trysts are extremely detrimental to the morals of our young.

Your young correspondent openly makes the assertion that if such a law were passed, the young people would violate it. Why? Is a public highway and a parked car necessary to love?

Perhaps I am old-fashioned, but when a young man called on me, I always preferred, and I think he preferred, the dignity of my own parlor. Have times changed so greatly?

I hardly expect to see this letter appear in your open forum, but if it does, I hope it will be instrumental in aiding the passing of such a ruling in our own state.

N. CRINOLINE.

Charlotte.

The News solicits letters from its readers upon topics of the day, especially when opinions contrary to the editors' are expressed. Such letters should be short, typewritten if possible, and signed.

The Dog on Relief

(Raleigh News & Observer)

A Negro in Raleigh City Court admitted that the seven dependents on his relief card were composed of six children and a dog. Quite correctly, he added that the dog has to eat, too. And how many of them are eating in North Carolina and the South! Sometimes it almost seems that the deeper the poverty, the more numerous the dogs. The News & Observer certainly is not opposing dogs or that effective army in their defense, the sentimental and ferocious company of the dog lovers. But a land where the dogs are many and the cows and sheep and hens are few, may have more dogs than this one on the relief cards.

Visiting Around

No Running Rose, He

(Hezaline, Smithfield Herald)

CLERK OF COURT ROSE SWEARS OUT WARRANT AGAINST HIMSELF

Mr. Wimpy Been Up That Way Recently?

(Oakland Item, Transylvania Times)

Clarence Norton had the misfortune of losing a fine two-year-old Guernsey heifer recently. He does not know whether some one has hauled her away or some of the hungry loafers have butchered her. Anyway she can't be found in her old range.

Naw, They're Freckles

(Waxhaw Enterprise)

New mode of greeting in Waxhaw: Do you have the measles?

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Registered U. S. Patent Office

By Ripley

On request, sent with stamped, addressed envelope, Mr. Ripley will furnish proof of anything appearing in BIN.

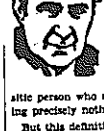
Explanation of Today's Cartoon

THE FATHER OF 25 COLONELS—Jacques de Thiers (1630-1747) of Puy-de-Dome, France, was the father of 25 sons and one daughter. Each son became a colonel in the French army. The 25 Colonels Thiers each commanded a French regiment at the battle of Fleurus, Belgium, on July 1, 1690, when 35,000 Frenchmen defeated 70,000 Dutch-Germans. The sturdy father of 25 colonels lived to the age of 117.

IT SEEMS TO ME

By HEYWOOD BROUN

I LIKE the book by Lin Yutang called "The Importance of Living," because it has nothing to do with success. I hope it will be taken as a chaser by all the vast number of readers who have perused Dale Carnegie.



One of the best chapters in Lin's collection of philosophic essays deals with the art of loafing. This is a practice not well understood in America. Indeed, the word "loafer" is libelous. In current usage one who loafs is a parasitic person who sits around all day doing precisely nothing.

Look At Bill If You Don't Believe It

I knew that Bill was good before the first week was out because he never showed up on time, and if I ever bent over the mass of detail which cluttered my executive desk he took occasion to beat it out of the office without bothering to say, "Good night, boss."

That was the form I suggested to the members of the staff. I explained that I felt self-conscious if anybody called me "mister." It all ended up with my being called "Uncle Heywood." There wasn't any dissipation in that office. Sometimes I still wonder how we ever got the page out. But we always did. I kept a four-column cut of Christy Mathewson in one of the drawers of the desk, and if there was a hole in the page and I could remember which drawer we fished out the picture and went to press.

There have been better-looking sport pages, but not so very many which were better written. When Bill wanted Bill he wasn't there. He would be around the corner, but when he came back he always had a little masterpiece ready to thump out on his typewriter. He knew the trick. The man worthwhile is the man who always keeps in mind the thought, "I mustn't strain myself." Some day before I get too old to profit by it I'm going to learn not to work so hard.

For Success Keep An Eye On A Clock

The distinction is of importance. Loafing and hibernation will be confused only by the inattentive observer. As a matter of fact, the person who works all day long seldom accomplishes much. The good workman in any field of endeavor ought to learn to be expert in tossing aside his tools.

I have no intention of endeavoring to do a book in competition with Dale Carnegie, because I have only one theory for success which I would recommend to the younger generation, and it can be stated in a sentence—"Always be sure to watch the clock." Possibly a postscript in the same spirit might be added—"Try and be the first one out of the shop when the whistle blows."

Speaking As A Quondam Executive

Such statements may be taken by some as an effort to be antic or whimsical, but I was never more serious in my life. The man who has no lively interest outside his job will never be particularly useful to anybody.

I have never met a pay roll, but for almost a year I was an executive having a staff of ten persons to whom I could give orders, although they never paid much attention. The job was that of sports editor, and I thought I was pretty good, although the man who ran the paper did not agree with this estimate. Indeed, he disagreed so violently that he eased me out of the job on a sunny night just before Christmas. There is no evidence even yet that he regrets his rash action.

And yet he should. I got for my employer—and it was wholly my own idea—the best sports writer the paper ever had before or since. I refer to Bill McGeehan.

That Fixed Him!

(Louis Graves, Chapel Hill Weekly)

At the dinner at the Inn Tuesday evening Colonel Bullitt told a story about a rebuff administered by his younger brother, then four years old, to a grouchy citizen of Louisville, Kentucky.

Colonel Bullitt's father was a member of the cavalry force of General John Hunt Morgan, the celebrated Confederate raider, and in 1863 he was captured with the General and imprisoned in the Columbus, Ohio, penitentiary. In later years the story was told many times in the Bullitt household, and in the minds of the youngsters penitentiary came to be a word of high honor. To have been imprisoned with Morgan was one of the greatest distinctions that a Kentuckian could have.

One day in the 1880's the four-year-old boy, while on a street car (probably a horse-drawn one), tried to make friends with an old gentleman who sat beside him. The old gentleman was reading a newspaper and didn't want to be interrupted, and he repelled all advances. The child, offended, the young Bullitt deeply, when he got up to leave the car he said: "You don't know who I am! You wouldn't treat me that way if you knew my father had been in the penitentiary!"

Earlier Days

News of 75 and 100 Years Ago From Files in the State Library at Raleigh

JANUARY 24, 1863
75 YEARS AGO

THE CABINET SQUABBLE

The Herald says: "The latest phase of the Cabinet embroglio at Washington is a temporary armistice under which things return to the position in which they were. There will probably be for the present no changes whatever."

The Northern papers are full of the affair and it is evident that no bad feeling has been healed, though the broken Cabinet has been mended.

The Herald says that there is no hope for the vigorous, harmonious and successful prosecution of this war under the controlling influences, to which we may justly charge all our disasters.

And again, nobody believes that the botching up of the disruption in the Cabinet is more than temporary. It is like the rallying of the doomed sick man before his final dissolution. Public opinion is stronger than the Cabinet, and the Cabinet will soon have to go the way of all flesh. The crises, therefore, still continue and can only be solved by the final breaking up of the Cabinet, for it has lost the confidence of the country and saltpetre cannot save it.

—Fayetteville Observer.

JANUARY 24, 1838
100 YEARS AGO

NOMINATION OF HARRISON

The distinguished editor of the Cincinnati Gazette—a veteran in the school of politics—makes the following remarks on the proceedings of the meeting which recently nominated General Harrison, of that city. They are in the true Whig vein.

"We publish today the proceedings of the meeting in favor of General Harrison, held at the Court House on Tuesday evening last, and, in so doing, feel it a duty we owe to the Whig party, to express our decided disapproval of all that portion of them that goes against the proposed national convention and which nominates General Harrison for President without qualification, pledging the members of the meeting to his support under all circumstances."

—Fayetteville Observer.

Tit for Tat

(Columbia Record)

When the South Carolina "drys" and no ohe denies them the right to their opinion in opposing liquor sales, nor questions their sincerity—attempt to blame the business recession on the repeal of prohibition and call it a "liquor depression," they are treading on dangerous ground.

They make it possible for the "wets" to describe the great depression as the "prohibition depression" with the explanation that this recession did not set in until the dry forces had begun to show new signs of life.