

L.J. - Sunoco. Wed., Dec. 9, 1936.

47

There was a real Gilbert and Sullivan touch to the meeting of the House of Commons this afternoon. As you can imagine, once again every bench was occupied, private members even standing in the aisles. The peers' gallery and the distinguished ~~ix~~ visitors' gallery would have had to be made of rubber to accommodate everybody who wanted places. In an atmosphere so tense you could have heard a ~~pant's button breaking off, the~~ ^{cat walking on velvet} the Speaker declared the session open. ^π Everybody's eyes were focused on the front treasury bench. With bated breath and panting pulses, the members and spectators expected a statement from His Majesty's government on the one question of the hour. And what did they hear? A languid figure arose from the front treasury bench, put on his top hat, and said: "His Majesty's government have for some time been giving their earnest consideration to the question of provision of relief for the Spanish civil population."

The gasp of disappointment^l that arose in that old Gothic chamber was like the noise of five hundred pins stuck into five hundred toy balloons. ^l If there was one thing more

than another that the congregation wanted to hear nothing about at that moment, it was the plight of the civilian population of Spain. Unruly members started to scuffle their feet, to whisper and grumble in their impatience. Finally, the leader of the Labor benches took pity on them and brought up the big question:- ~~xxxx~~ "Has the Prime

48
Minister anything to add to the statement he made to the House on Monday?" ^{This was} asked Major Clement Atlee. [#] "I regret I am not in a position to add anything today, but I hope to make a statement tomorrow," ^{Prime Minister} replied Stanley Baldwin.

Thereupon the Labor leader pressed another question: "Will the Prime Minister give us good hope in his statement tomorrow, because he will realize the anxiety which is constantly increasing as long as this matter is not dealt with." The answer to that was: "I can assure the Right Honorable gentleman of the House that no one knows it more than I do."

So there you are! We have the assurance of Great Britain's Prime Minister that ^{he} ~~we now~~ know as ^{well} ~~much~~ as ^{how} ~~we do~~ ^{badly we want to know!}

A dramatic critic would say that the action of the drama is

49

slowing up. In fact, ~~in~~ any good critic would give a playwright a spanking who left such a gap in the movement of his plot. The only novelty in addition to the statement of the Prime Minister, which wasn't a novelty at all, is that Mr. Baldwin called an emergency meeting of his Cabinet, later ^{for} ~~in the~~ ¹ ~~the~~ evening.

A somewhat similar scene took place in the House of Lords, similar but tamer. There's ~~xxxxxx~~ never any excitement in the Lords. In fact a good dramatic scene in that stolid Upper Chamber would of itself almost constitute a constitutional crisis. In the Upper Chamber it was the Right Honorable Lord Snell who asked the Right Honorable Lord Halifax whether he had anything to say. Said the Earl of Halifax: "My Lords, I have nothing further to add today, but I hope to be in a position to make a statement tomorrow."

TP Meanwhile, ^{on} the beautiful mountainside, two miles above Cannes, ^{on the Riviera,} an element of comedy was injected into the situation. That's where ^{news} the correspondents of five nations are keeping a watch over the heroine in the piece.

50

The comedy was provided by a passage of words between the newspaper men and the Right Honourable, the Lord Brownlow, Lord-in-Waiting to ~~the King~~ ^{His Majesty} and apparently ~~the official guard~~ ^{Lord custodian} of Mrs. Simpson while she's in France. At any rate, he ^{is} her spokesman. The correspondents ~~became~~ ^{were} quite understandably curious about ~~the~~ ^{yesterday's} airplane voyage from London to Cannes of Mrs. Simpson's solicitor and ~~the~~ ^{the doctor -} Dr. Kirkwood. The newspaper men wondered whether the solicitor, Mr. Goddard, had not brought documents for Mrs. Simpson to sign.

"Not at all," replied Lord Brownlow, "actually she signed nothing." Then he explained: "On my word of honour I assure you all Mr. Goddard came here for was to consult Mrs. Simpson about the renting of her house in London." The correspondents took that and then asked: "How about the doctor?"

"The doctor," replied the noble lord. "Oh yes, ^{yes,} the doctor. Well, the doctor's coming means nothing so far as Mrs. Simpson is concerned. As a matter of fact Dr. Kirkwood did not even see Mrs. Simpson. His only reason for coming is that Mr. Goddard is ill and it was considered necessary

51
for him to be accompanied by a physician on that flight. That," he concluded, "I assure you gentlemen is all there is to it."

To which the correspondents replied with a bow: "We accept Your Lordship's word." But as they went down the hill they said to each other: "Why would a sick man make a hurried airplane flight all this distance just to talk about the renting of a house?"

"Yes," replied another one. "And if he needs a physician to take care of him on the journey, why does he need the head of the Queen Charlotte Maternity Hospital in London?" What sort of a solicitor can he be? .

To make matters still more awkward for Lord Brownlow, just after he had given out that plausible explanation the correspondents met the solicitor. Mr. Goddard was frankness itself. When they asked him about Mrs. Simpson's London house he replied: "House? What do you mean house? I came to discuss certain aspects of Mrs. Simpson's divorce." And after that was Lord Brownlow's face red?

The Right Honorable Winston Churchill was not the only statesman out of office to perceive an opportunity in the constitutional crisis. There is, for instance, the Right Honorable David Lloyd George. The suddenness of this whole upheaval found "L.G.", as he is popularly known, in Kingston, Jamaica. He promptly booked reservations on the next steamer sailing for England, eager to get into it. Tonight we learn that he has cancelled those reservations. That seems to signify that L.G. has private information that the constitutional crisis is virtually settled and that it no longer affords an opportunity for a willing statesman out of a job to find a new activity.

(All signs tonight point toward a settlement, and that settlement — abdication.)

CIERVA

The crash of the Royal Dutch airliner at Croydon has a sad, ironic note. Juan de la Cierva, killed. And he was an inventor who had devoted most of his life and talents to making flying safe. His principal invention being the autogyro, the windmill plane.

Another bit of irony is the fact that it was an air crash sixteen years ago that got de la Cierva interested in aviation. It made him want to build a plane that could go aloft without any risks. And so after years of experimenting, he evolved that curious looking roto plane, that would go straight up or over, and do incredible things.

Up to nineteen Twenty-Eight, Cierva was known principally as a charming fellow, a well known Spanish sportsman, a friend of Ex-King Alphonso. In Nineteen Twenty-Eight his name began to loom large in aviation annals, when he flew his first autogyro over the English channel. He was then barely thirty, when I knew him first.

Usually he made it a point to travel only by autogyro, using the usual type of standard aircraft only when absolutely necessary. So today, one of the few times when he flew in a craft not of his own design, he perished!

HINDENBURG

It seems that one of Monday's dispatches did an injustice to the veteran sky Captain, Ernst Lehman and the crew of the dirigible HINDENBURG. There were stories that the great airliner was in trouble and had made a forced landing in the French mountains. As a matter of fact, the HINDENBURG was moving safely into the hangar at Frankfurt-am-Main. The reason for the story was that the HINDENBURG had some slight trouble crossing over the mountains.

INDIANS

One of my interesting friends happens to be an ex-chief of the Blackfoot Indians. Discussing American history, he *repeated that ancient remark:-* ~~once remarked jestingly~~ "When you licked us it was an heroic victory. Whenever we licked you it was another Indian ~~■~~ massacre."

Most people admit now that our treatment of the American Aborigines ^{constitutes} ~~was~~ one of the ~~most~~ unflattering chapters in American history. ^{And} Another paragraph in that chapter was written today. Judge ^{it} for yourselves.

In 1855 the Blackfoot ^{set} were the rightful owners of some forty million acres of land in the West. Uncle Sam concluded a treaty with them promising to pay them for their land:- Forty million acres at a dollar and a quarter an acre. When you consider that those forty million acres constitute two-thirds of the rich and valuable State of Montana, you must admit that even at that price Uncle Sam was making a good bargain for himself.

55

But he didn't ~~even~~ keep ^{the} ~~his~~ bargain. From time to time that treaty was amended by Congress. The haggling and niggling continued until the price was cut down to seventeen cents an

acre, Seventeen cents on the basis of only seventeen million acres instead of the original forty million! And then we grouse about the World War debts. As the Redskin would say - huh! huh!

And now that Blackfoot debt has been finally wiped out. How much do you suppose the noble redman got? A hundred and forty-six thousand bucks -- one hundred and forty-six thousand in settlement of a debt of more than fifty millions. Just a token payment!

BASEBALL

56

It seems a trifle early to be talking about baseball. But fans all over the country have their eye on that mutiny in the baseball world, the mutiny of the Big League owners against Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis. Ever since the Black Sox scandal of sixteen years ago, High Commissioner Landis has ruled baseball with an iron hand. Quite recently the club owners took steps to put at least a velvet glove on that iron hand. And tonight the issue between them is sharp and clear-cut. Sports writers are betting that by tomorrow night the little white haired judge will have no iron hand to rule with.

Tomorrow's meeting will settle it, ~~the meeting of~~ the joint meeting of the American and National League owners in New York. They held their individual meetings today, the National League at the Waldorf and the American in the Commodore. And their proceedings indicated that, though everything is serene on the surface, they are about to ~~trim~~ trim their High Commissioner of his arbitrary power.

the Car
Hitherto ~~he~~ has been in a peculiar situation. On the one hand
magnates
~~they have~~ paid him his salary, on the other he has told them
what to do, how to run their clubs. So there'll be a lot of
excitement for tomorrow's meeting.

57
~~Incidentally,~~ The Big Leaguers today declared that
there is a considerable misunderstanding about the announcement
of their ~~decision~~ decision to have a less lively ball. The
composition and ~~the~~ thickness of the cover will not be changed.
What they are going to do is ~~to~~ raise the stitches so as to give
the pitchers a better *grip on the sphere.*
~~break~~ If the old apple is hit properly
in Nineteen Thirty-Seven, it will go just as far as it did in
Nineteen Thirty-Six, *but it may be harder to hit.*

DALI

Perhaps you have heard of the latest art craze that comes from France. They call it "surrealism". That's the mania that has succeeded Dadaism, post-impressionism, futurism and the other lunaticisms that have swept the studios on the banks of the Seine this century. When I call surrealism the fashion of the moment, I have to be careful. It was the fashion at eight o'clock this morning, heaven knows what may have succeeded it among the madcap artists.

Now, surrealism has descended upon us plain folks in these United States. As James Whitcomb Riley would have said, "the surrealists 'll get you, if you don't watch out!" Their prophet on these shores is Salvador Dali. The idea of surrealism, he says, is to show the sub-conscious on canvas. Let's see what our own Parisien Gertrude Stein says about him. "Dali's art," she declares, "is snapshot photographs in color of subconscious images, surrealiste, extravagant, paranoiac, hyphagogical, extra-pictorial and supersentive pigeons in the grass".

But it now seems that we are threatened with surrealism

right in the inviolate bosom of the American home. For Senor Dali proposes to sell us the idea of transparent furniture made to fit not only the contours but the sub-conscience of the person who owns it. What would the sub-conscience contour of Mae West be? If he succeeds, you may expect to see walls decorated with furs and feathers, and drink out of fur-lined cups. Painter Dali tells us that we already have surrealists in our midst. The top-notch American surrealists being the Marx brothers.

Maybe the titles of some of Mr. Dali's paintings will give you an idea. One is called "A couple with their heads full of clouds." Still another has the name, "Soft Construction with Boiled Beans. And a third masterpiece is entitled "Why not sneeze?" Why not? and s - l - u - t - m.