

LOWELL THOMAS - SUNOCO - FRIDAY, AUGUST 10, 1934

ROCHESTER

Hello, Hello Rochester -- happy birthday! You're a hundred years old but as lively as a town of sixteen.

Yes, Rochester, New York, began its centennial celebration today. They're calling it "A Century on Parade," and the hi-jinks will be on for a whole month.

Arthur P. Kelly, one of the Rochester Centennial committee running the big show writes and tells me of the crowds they're expecting.

"Many thousands of motorists," he says "will come to Rochester for our celebration". "And you might remind them that Blue Sunoco is the thing to bring them here."

Well, here's reminding!

Italy

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The report is that there's something more than mere spectacle ^{and} ~~of~~ ceremony in Mussolini's order that the ministers of his government shall blossom forth as warriors. Big Italian war maneuvers are about to be held, and according to Il Duce's order the distinguished ministers of state will have to take their places like regular soldiers in the firing-line.

But it won't be all just so much sham-battle. The gas attacks will be real, with the troops advancing against gas just as they would in actual warfare. And when a distinguished minister of justice and ^a ~~stately~~ ^{stately} under-secretary ~~of~~ ^{of} foreign affairs get the order to put on masks, they'd better be snappy about it in a ^vhonest-to-goodness military way, or they'll get a dose of tear-gas or some other noxious war vapor that will knock them for a row of trench mortars.

CHINA

CHINESE DRAFT

Here's a Chinese slant on those non-aggression treaties and peace-pacts we've been hearing about. Chinese leaders say they have their reasons for not wanting to sign a non-aggression treaty with Russia. They believe that a war between Nippon and the Soviets is sure to come. And if it does a standing peace-pact with Russia would tend to line ^d ^{up} China _^ against Japan. In which case Japan would seize some more Chinese territory.

CHINESE DROUGHT

Our drought over here is pleasant and moist -- compared with the one they are having in China. Our temperatures seem almost cool beside the one hundred and twenty degrees reported from various places in the flowery land -- not so flowery when the heat burns like that. And the ugliest word, so familiar in China is "famine".

FOLLOW CHINA DROUGHT

The drought in China is so severe that a magistrate near Hankow has put out a sign reading:- "No gods will be received after noon". Yes, even the gods have to keep office hours.

The Chinese farmers are praying for rain, and the way they do it is to bring the local gods to town and have a general prayer ceremony with a beating of drums and gongs.

It's an old Chinese custom that when a local deity is brought to ^{town} ~~town~~ like that, he is first taken on a visit to the magistrate. That local magistrate has been kept so busy all day long receiving the visits of the gods that now he has called a halt. He'll say *Good Morning Gods, but not good afternoon.*

CHINESE STRIKE

Yes, we have our drought, and the Chinese have one to match it. We've been having our strike troubles, and the Far Eastern celestials are having their's too.

Slashing automobile tires has been known ever here, but in Shanghai they're slashing jinrikisha tires. There's a strike among the coolies who pull those two-wheel conveyances so characteristic of the Orient. The walk-out is snarled up in complications and ~~troubled with~~ violence.

In the old days the jinrikishas rattled along on wheels with iron rims, but modernity has brought pneumatic rubber tires. Hence the slashing of tires as the striking coolies try to enforce their ~~jinrikisha walk-out~~ run-out.

EXPLORATION

The title of this next bit should be -- powdering the lion's face.

Mr. and Mrs. Martin Johnson of African fame are ~~xxx~~ back on our shores for a visit. And Mrs. Johnson, the irrepressible Osa, tells of quite a Johnsonian episode while they were making an aeroplane trip in a remote part of Central Africa. She was in the cockpit of the plane which was standing on the ground. She was getting ready to cook dinner and had a pan full of flour, ready to mix some dough.

Then she saw a lion stroll up and put its front paws on the fuselage of the plane. The giant cat looked up at her. She took the pan of flour and threw it in the lion's face. And was that king of beasts surprized? He looked funny too, with his majestic countenance, his flowing mane, and his bristling whiskers powdered white with flour. I suppose he sneezed a bit too. ~~as he sniffed the flour.~~

Anyway, he let out a deep growl, wheeled around and trotted away. And after him marched thirteen other lions, which had been lurking in a thicket. It sure is a lion story -- not lying -- lion.

EXPLORATION - 2

And then here's Clyde Eddy, who once again has shot the dangerous rapids of the world's wildest River -- the Colorado. A three hundred and sixty-five mile trip by boat down the pounding, raging cataracts of that man-killer stream. Four boats made the trip, though one had to be abandoned a hundred miles before the end. One of the members of the party was thrown into the river five times, and there were all sorts of escapes from drowning.

Clyde Eddy tells how in one desolate place they buried the skeleton of a man. The leg bones were broken -- probably some wandering prospector who had fallen over the cliff -- some adventuring miner who never came back.

FISH

In 1921 a couple of fish stories have come along. One tells how Thomas Howell, the Chicago financier has established a world record by capturing a ~~sevent~~ hundred and ninety-two pound tuna fish off Nova Scotia. The big battler put up a ~~kefft~~ terrific fight and dragged the thirty-eight ton yacht for two hundred miles. The fisherman had the giant tuna on his line for two and one half ~~xx~~ days before he succeeded in landing it. This fish is twelve pounds heavier than the one ^{with which} ~~that~~ Zane Grey, the novelist, established a record with a few years ago.

The ^{second} ~~main~~ fish story concerns neither a tuna, nor a minnow nor a whale. I don't know what it concerns -- nobody seems to be able to identify the ^{is} fish. It is described as being twenty-~~six~~ feet long with an eight foot tail, and ~~xxx~~ is fifteen feet around the middle. It has five rows of teeth, five sets of gills and five fins under its body -- quintuplets.

Let's ~~christen~~ christen it the "quintuplet fish" as a help to the ~~xxx~~ puzzled New Foundland fishermen who ^{caught it,} ~~got it.~~

And talking about fish, here's one about a man -- maybe.

In India, they have found a skeleton thirty-one and a half feet long, with leg-bones ten feet long. They say it looks like a human skeleton. It maybe a man, but that sounds fishy.

It looks like the usual end, on the rocks -- for the romance between the society leader and the prize-fighter.

A new chapter in the life of Mrs. Madeline Force Astor Dick Fiermonte.

She has had a life ^{that would make a} ~~to make the~~ most spectacular novel.

When she was eighteen she made one of the most brilliant of marriages -- to the multi-millionaire John Jacob Astor. A few months later she was saved from the wreck of the Titanic. She sat huddled in a life-boat in ~~the~~ mid-Atlantic, and watched the ^{great ship} ~~boat~~ go down with her husband aboard. Four months later, her son, the present John Jacob Astor was born.

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Later on, she married a childhood friend, William K. Dick. Then she was led to the altar once more by Enzo Fiermonte, the Italian Adonis of the ring. The marriage of the society leader and the prize-fighter has been much in the news, but now it is rumoured that a divorce is in the offing.

When asked about it, Fiermonte put himself on record this way: "I intend to live my ~~lif~~ own life in my own way, and its Mrs. Fiermonte's privilege to do as she pleases about our

matrimonial status."

You would hardly call that a denial.

PREACHER

It's an old story in the ~~East~~ East, how a witch-
doctor among the natives will claim that ^asupernatural power
will protect him against knives and bullets. Something like
that now has happened in North Carolina. A Holiness preacher
in a wild revival told his congregation that even a rattle-
snake could not harm a true disciple of the Holiness cult.

And he tried to prove it. In an exciting scene he
seized a rattleⁿ~~snake~~ and held it aloft. ^{In a}~~And~~ flash the reptile
struck and buried its fang^s in the miracle-worker's arm. He fled
screaming out of the church and rolled on the ground.

His mysterious powers did ~~not~~ work.

GENERAL

A new kind of swindle comes to light with the police on the lookout for a bogus Brigadier-General. The general is charged with swindling a young fellow out of five hundred dollars, under the pretext of getting him admitted to West Point.

It has the old familiar ring of the con game, with the fake military functionary claiming he was quite a power behind the throne in the United States Army. He ascended to the real height of impudence when he spoke magnificent words as follows:-

"It's all set my boy." "I saw the President, and he signed the order for your appointment this morning."

So the phoney Brigadier got the five hundred dollars and now the police are out to get him.

GUNS

Here's one answer to the question -- Where do the gangsters get their guns? And it's rather a startling answer. Some of the gangsters have been getting their guns from the government. The Attorney-General's office in Washington reported that one thousand twenty-seven pistols and thousands of rounds of ammunition have been stolen from National Guard armories in the past year and a half, and they found their way to the criminal classes. Government guns have become gangsters guns.

So Washington is asking the National Guard in the various states to keep a better watch over their supplies of armament.

And by the way, it seems that Federal law for the registration of fire-arms isn't quite as inclusive as it appeared to be. It applies only to machine guns, sub-machine guns, and sawed off shotguns. These will have to be registered with the Federal authorities. But the regulation doesn't apply to pistols and naturally enough not to sporting goods.

SILVER

They must have known it was coming sooner or later -- I mean that nationalization of silver. It was all provided for in the Silver Purchase Act, which was one of the last bills the seventy-third Congress passed before it adjourned.

The act gave the government the power to buy silver ~~until~~ until it had one third as much silver as gold -- in other words the metallic base for our currency should be twenty-five percent silver and seventy-five percent gold.

Included in the bill was the provision that the Treasury Department be authorized to take over all the silver in the United States -- nationalize it. So the only real point of doubt, a crucial point, was that nobody knew when the government would perform its silvery act. That's why the world of finance threw something of a spasm when the announcement was made yesterday.

Let's observe that when the bill was passed, the Silver Senators wanted the government to buy ⁵/₄ silver until the price of the white metal was pushed up to the 1926 figure of one dollar and twenty-nine cents an ounce. But the President

wouldn't have it that way. He insisted that the top price of silver should be set at a tiny fraction over fifty cents an ounce. And right now that's the price at which the Treasury is taking *it* over silver.

ROOSEVELT

President Roosevelt ends his vacation, ready to plunge into ~~more of the~~ ^{as much} hardest work he has ever tackled. He's got to wrestle with the present and with the immediate future -- summer and winter.

The summer means drought, with ~~a~~ vast areas of Mid-western crops burned black. It is ~~settled~~ ^{stated} that there is no possibility of food shortage in the country as a whole, but there ~~is a~~ ^{is a} definite shortage of food, money and everything in the places where the heat and dryness ~~do~~ ^{have done} their most destructive work.

As for winter, it's the familiar theme of emergency relief for the unemployed.

In 1930, the present chairman was a member of the Tariff Commission. President Hoover suggested it would be a good thing for him to sell all the securities he held. "Because?", explained the president, "some industry in which your own stock might come before the Commission".

The noise of the campaign for the Fall election is growing louder. Henry P. Fletcher, the new chairman of the Republican National Committee, comes forward with ^{an advance key-note.} ~~a campaign~~

~~key-note.~~

"The return of common sense and constitutional government" -- that's the key-note, ~~and~~ he sounded ~~it~~ before a convention of Republicans in Illinois.

"American liberty should not be sold, not even to the government", declared Chairman Fletcher.

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There's a good deal of talk about whether Mr. Fletcher is a Hoover man or not. There have been rumours of a rift between the Chairman and the ex-president. But Chairman Fletcher laughs it off and tells how Mr. Hoover ~~was~~ once made him one hundred and sixty thousand dollars richer.

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"Because", explained the president, "some industry in which you own stock might come before the Commission".

That didn't sound so good because in 1930 it looked as if stocks had ^{hit}~~is~~ bottom and were ^{due}~~down~~ to take a nice big jump. However, Tariff Commissioner ~~Fletcher~~ followed the presidential hint and sold out.

Not long afterward the market crashed again, took another nose-dive, and ~~landed way deep down~~. The net result was that Henry Fletcher saved one hundred and ~~sixty~~ thousand dollars by selling when the President told him to.

He says he's been grateful to Mr. Hoover ever since. Well, you can figure out for yourself how much ^{effect}~~appear~~ that little financial story has ~~had~~ on the Hoover or anti-Hoover set-up in the Republican National Committee just now.

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I suppose that when a man gets to be sixty he should be cheery and gay. I don't know just why, but it seems like a good idea. He's seen enough and been to enough places to get a tolerant perspective of things, and ~~won't take things~~ ^{doesn't take them} so seriously, those little irritating things, those antagonizing ~~many~~ annoying things.

Herbert Hoover was a serious young man, ^{you} can tell it from his youthful pictures. He was a serious middle-aged man, and a solemn-minded president. Today he's celebrating his sixtieth birthday, and ~~I'll bet he's doing it~~ more gayly than he ever did before.

No so long ago, he conclusively proved that he has a sense of humour that is increasing with the years. He revealed a hilarious Herbert Hoover when he said in a speech: "There's much talk about codes, but nothing has been said about a code for ex-presidents." "So", he added, "I've solved that for myself. As I work for myself, I have reduced my hours to nothing and ^ddouble^d my wages."

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Then he continued with a bit of personal confession which may give us a tip on how he spent today, his sixtieth birthday.

"I get up fairly early," he said, "and take a long look over Santa Clara Valley. It's very pleasant. Then I have my breakfast and a walk. Then I get my mail and look over the newspapers. Then I take another long look at the valley, thanking Providence I am in California. Then I sit down and think things over, and spend the rest of the day, laughing, and laughing and laughing."

Well, I hope I'll be able to spend a sixtieth birthday like that. And I hope you will ^{too --} ~~laughing and laughing and laughing.~~ ^{But why wait until we're sixty,} ~~in fact I hope you all feel like that~~ ^{Let's start right now. Ha ha, ha ha, ha.} ~~right now and,~~
and SOLONG UNTIL TOMORROW.