

C. J. - Lunoco. - Tues., Dec. 17, 1935.

Canon
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FRANCE

H
Premier Laval of France, defending that Franco-British peace agreement, had his argument dramatized vividly in the Chamber of Deputies today. In the sprightly, blazing way of French controversy, Laval was answering the attacks on that offer which he and the British Foreign Minister have made to Mussolini. All the uproar we've been hearing was being repeated noisily in the Chamber of Deputies. The Radicals of the left were shouting that it was a partitioning of Ethiopia in favor of Italy, rewarding Mussolini instead of punishing him, a deadly blow at the League of Nations. Laval's defense wreathed itself around one word - peace. He spoke of the danger of war flaring in Europe. It was all an attempt to put an end to that deadly peril. Anything to stop a general European war.

The dramatic act came when the swarthy, stocky little Premier turned to the deputies of the left, who were so loudly opposed to the peace plan.

"If you were in our place", he shouted to them, "what would you do?"

"ah!" "They would start a war", yelled a Conservative deputy

of the right. And with that retort, the Conservative ~~deputies~~ ^{arose} and gave Laval a thundering cheer. The Radicals of the left yelled their protests, and there was the usual pandemonium ^{that goes with} ~~at~~ the French parliamentary system.

What it all came to was a kind of stage play dramatization of Laval's contention that those who oppose the offer to Mussolini are talking in favor of taking the chance of a European war.

The Premier refused to make detailed explanations of his diplomacy in negotiating the Franco-British agreement. He said there wasn't time for that; **S**imply, definitely, he demanded a vote of confidence. He called upon the deputies to say "Yes" or "No" to his act in making the offer to Mussolini. A vote was called. And Laval won. He won by a majority of fifty.

For the moment at least that seems to put the okay of France on that bitterly criticized and angrily denounced agreement which would turn two-thirds of Ethiopia over to Italy. Laval made it clear to the deputies, however, that the decision rested with the League of Nations, and that he would stand by the verdict of the League.

ENGLAND

In London, Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin faced his own Parliament. It was no decisive vote or anything like that - merely ~~an~~ exchange ^{of} some exceedingly interesting conversation. Stanley Baldwin is not known to be a flashing wit in debate, a deft verbal swordsman in a duel of argument. England regards him rather as the ~~bluff~~ ^{bluff}, hearty type of Briton, strong and honest, not too clever, maybe a little clumsy. England likes him for it - he is so thoroughly British. ~~Well~~ ^{Well}, the ~~bluff~~ ^{bluff} and hearty ~~Stanley~~ Baldwin indulged in a few words in Parliament today that ^{certainly} would hardly seem to come under the heading of skill, cunning, ^{or} ~~deftness~~ ^{deftness}. Labor ~~leaders~~ members were asking him questions about the way the British fleet was concentrated at Alexandria, clustered in the harbor. Of course, Alexandria is about the only eastern Mediterranean port at the disposal of England, the only port capable of accommodating large numbers of war ships in the time of winter storms.

But in Baldwin's explanation, he talked along like this. He said it had been originally planned for the British fleet, mobilized in the Mediterranean, to make a cruise and call at a number of ports - various Italian ports. "But", continued the

Prime Minister, "in view of the hostile press campaign against England in Italy, it became clear that visits to Italian ports would be inopportune." With that the House of Commons roared with laughter - sour, ironic laughter. And the leader of Labor arose and retorted with the sardonic question: "Is it the policy of the government to use the British fleet, if necessary, or to run away?"

Well, you can't blame him for being sarcastic about it. There's something decidedly comic about the idea of the British fleet, mobilized in the Mediterranean, threatening Mussolini with its menacing power - and then, ^{at the same time,} planning to pay visits to Italian ports. And it's equally comic to think of the British navy being kept away by a hostile press campaign - newspaper talk. But that bit of parliamentary tilting today reminds us of things we've been hearing, that the British naval and naval-base situation is none too strategic in the eastern Mediterranean.

In the background of all this we see that perplexing and bedeviled Franco-British offer to Rome. With all the uproar ^{of} protest in England, the British outlook for the peace plan ^{now} simmers ^s down to this. The intensely Conservative Parliament will

support the Conservative Cabinet on the score of the Hoare-Laval agreement. At Geneva the British government will stand in favor of the arrangement its Foreign Minister made. But England will not push the plan before the League. Great Britain drove with high pressure in putting the Sanctions against Italy through the League.

But -
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In its highly favorable offer to Italy, John Bull will stand back, and make little open attempt to influence the League.

ETHIOPIA

Today's war news from Ethiopia is the most interesting in a long time. It's no Battle of Waterloo or Battle of the Marne that's reported. Merely ^{that} a force of three thousand Ethiopians attacked and drove back ~~a force of~~ Italian outposts on the Northern front. ^{It} The singular thing is that the news of the Ethiopian victory comes not from Addis Ababa, but from Rome -- not from the emperor, Haile Selassie, but from the dictator, Mussolini. So far as I know, the Ethiopians haven't reported their victory at all. But Rome describes ^{it} in ~~an~~ an official dispatch, and puts emphasis on the Ethiopian success. ^{It} Those three thousand warriors hurled back the Italian outposts in pell-mell fashion for a distance of twelve miles. And Rome emphasizes that the Italians suffered severe losses -- four Italian officers killed and three wounded. Nine Italian soldiers killed, several dozen of their native troops killed. As modern wars go, these losses, reckoned by the half dozen, don't sound like so much. But the Italian dispatch describes them as "considerable." ^{Why?}

^ I wonder what the answer is. Perhaps it's to be

found in the further Italian statement that the long expected
big battle on the Northern front is beginning. Maybe Rome is
telling about the Italian defeat to ^{set the stage for the coming battle.} ~~emphasize that~~ ~~or~~ maybe Rome
wants to give the impression that, while all the peace parleying
is going on in Europe -- the big bad Ethiopians are attacking,
stirring up the war.

TEMPLE

2
The greatest instrument of romance in all the world, is -
a pick-axe. Untold imagination stirred, fantastic visions evoked,
by that humble implement for digging - that is, when the
archeologists ^{use the pick-axe.} ~~do the digging.~~ The tombs of Pharaohs, fabulous
cities of central Asia, villas of ancient Romans - these come to
the light of day with revealing wonder, as the patient archeologist
digs and digs.

What's the latest? Well, the very mention evokes a blazing
pageant of romance. We hear that a British expedition is unearthing
the ruins of a temple in Egypt that Cleopatra dedicated to Caesarion,
her son. Caesarion's father was Julius Caesar. The expedition is
sponsored by the Egypt Exploration Society of London. The British
capitalist, Sir Robert Mond, is backing it. Oliver Myers, the
Egyptologist, is the leader. They are working in upper Egypt,
The romantic ruins are near Luxor, where the great ^{Temple} ~~pyramids~~ of
^{Harnak} ~~the Pharaohs~~ stand in age-old majesty.

So let's rehearse the story - of how mighty Caesar became
enamored of the beautiful Egyptian queen, Cleopatra, and ~~dedicated~~
with her for a ~~season~~ season at Alexandria. ^{Then} Caesar went on to

his imperial destiny and doom, and was assassinated by Brutus and Cassius. And the only son he left behind him was the boy Caesarion, Cleopatra's son.

The sorceress of the Nile built for Caesarion a temple amid the sands of upper Egypt, near those stupendous awe inspiring ruins of ancient Thebes. Then later Mark Anthony came storming, Mark Anthony whom Shakespeare called - "The triple pillar of the world turned into a strumpet's fool." And that he was, when Cleopatra caught him with her enchantments. And so tragedy spun its way until Mark Anthony drank the draft of poison and Cleopatra ended her own self by the bite of an asp.

But what of Caesarion, Caesar's son and hers? History tells in pity how the new masters of Rome - Anthony and Octavius saw danger in the boy left by Caesar and the Egyptian queen. So at their hands, Caesarion perished in obscure tragedy.

Such are the visions that a pick-axe now brings to memory, as its sharp point digs in the sands of upper Egypt.

OPERA

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The New York papers today are full of last night's resplendent opening at the Metropolitan Opera House. It was mentioned, I suppose, in the printed columns across the continent. Because the Metropolitan opening is not only the most spectacular affair in the world of music - even more so, it's the crowning social event. So plenty of people have had a chance to read of how the violins shrilled and horns tootled, how the singers sang, and how LA TRAVIATA went its tuneful, tearful way. Also - how the social register glittered in the Golden Horse Shoe. It was a sell-out success.

But there are always things behind the scene, back-stage angles, that tell the story most vividly. Round the Metropolitan Opera House they were talking today, not of sopranos and tenors, but of - photographers. The place simply swarmed with the boys that snap and shoot the pictures for the newspapers and newsreels - scores of them. Everything was just crawling with photographers.

"Any mishaps?" I asked Estelle Edwards, Operatic Contact Woman of the Photograph Department of the NEW YORK TIMES.

"Not a slip-up", she replied, "which made it very different

from last year. At the opening last December a photographer was getting a shot of the audience through an opening in the front curtain. Right behind him was a second curtain. He and his tripod were sort of tangled up in the rear one, never expecting it would go up. But it did. Somebody gave a wrong signal. And up went the curtain, and up went the photographer camera, tripod, and all! - tangled in it, hooked to it. He was carried high enough to break his neck, but he hung on, until somebody lowered the curtain."

"Then spoke up Frank Wenker, Press Agent for the Metropolitan. "If you want to tell how successful an opening is don't count the money in the box office, count the photographers backstage. Last night we had the biggest crowd of picture-takers in history."

Well, if the blaring of the trumpet, the rumbling of the bassoon and the high notes of the soprano, are any criterion of business - then, last night at the opera should be marked down on those charts which indicate that economic recovery is here.

ROOSEVELT

There won't be so much spending next year, not by the government. We've been hearing that for some time in the news from Washington. Tonight it's official. This year was made memorable by the Four Billion, Eight Hundred Million Work Relief Project, money stacked on top of money for a flood of stupendous spending. For next year we have the figure - Half a Billion.

We heard about it from the President himself, who today gave out the announcement that next year he intends to go to Congress and say, "Gentlemen, here's a new Public Works Program". And when Congress asks how much it will cost, Mr. Roosevelt will reply: "A mere Half a Billion". Well, the presidential campaign is coming fast, and the word is "retrenchment". We have known it for quite a while, that the President will go to the campaign with the contention that his giant plans have done their work, and we don't need huge projects any longer - because recovery is here, and it's time to let up. Tonight it ~~was~~ said in figures -- Four Billion, Eight Hundred Million this year - Half a Billion, next.

AVIATION

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Today they're paying honor to a man for something he did thirty-two years ago. The man -- Orville Wright. The event -- that first flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, on December Seventeenth, 1903. The Wright Brothers were trying out their new invention -- that rickety box-kite aeroplane. And Brother Orville won the lucky chance to ~~try it out~~ *have the first go at it.*

One of the appropriate ways to celebrate the birth of aviation and the first flight is to tell a flying thriller. Here's one from "Flying For 1936:"-- The Junior Aircraft Yearbook, published by the Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce, with headquarters here at Rockefeller Center. ⁷⁷ It tells how the pretty young Ya Ching was taking ^a flying lesson near San Francisco. Ya Ching was a Chinese girl, learning the art of flying. The pilot was ~~giving her acrobatic lessons.~~ ~~He was~~ just swinging over for some up-side-down flying. Ya Ching was fooling with her flying belt, the belt that held her in the cockpit. The flying belt came loose, just as the plane turned over, and down ^{head over heels thru space} went Ya Ching, the pretty young Chinese girl flying student. It was two miles above the ocean.

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On her way down Ya Ching was lucky enough to remember ~~ix~~ she had a parachute on. Also -- that the right thing to do was to pull the ring. She did, and the parachute billowed out.

So there was Ya Ching floating gently down into the ocean, where she would surely drown. Because parachutes are not meant for swimming.

But Ya Ching was certainly a lucky Chinese girl that day, because just as the plane had gone into reverse for the up-side-down flying, some eyes were watching it -- idly gazing eyes at the Naval Air Station, half a mile away. And when Ya Ching came tumbling parachuting down, the naval aviators knew there was something wrong with that picture.

In a brief minute they were taking off in a plane and by the time Ya Ching and her parachute had floated to the surface of the ocean, the plane was near. Just as the China girl was floundering in the water, the plane swooped low, and the aviator tossed a life belt to her, almost within her reach. She grabbed it. And a few minutes later a navy amphibean landed nearby, came taxiing, and hauled her out.

"Ya," said Ya Ching. Everything top side okay, my
lucky day. Saved in the nick of time. And in the nick of
time I'll day --

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.