

L.T. SUNOCO - Friday, December 21, 1934

Good Evening, Everybody:-

The big thrill of the day is again provided by old man ocean. Not one thrill, but three. From the masters of three vessels come stories of perils at sea, rescues, disasters narrowly averted.

One sensational escape was that of the crew of the freighter Ontario, on her way from Baltimore to Boston. That always terrifying cry:- "Fire at sea." Just as the Ontario was abreast of the New England coast, flames broke out in her hold. In the fight to subdue them several of the crew were injured, others were overcome by smoke. But the Ontario was lucky and made Boston Harbor.

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Therefore the flames were beaten down, but a new danger faced her from the tremendous volume of water that had been poured into her hold. Just as she was about to dock, she was on the verge of capsizing. Sea-going tugs and coastguard

vessels took her in tow and had to beach her.

While this was going on another freighter, the collier Severance, was sending out radio calls for help.

The Severance had lost her rudder in the storm. But the crew contrived to make repairs and she's limping into New York under her own power.

Perhaps the most dramatic story of all is the narrow escape of a giant liner, an escape from a disaster that might have rivaled the sinking of the Titanic for sheer horror.

The North German Lloyd Bremen arrived in Cherbourg today with a report from her master that she almost didn't arrive at all. He was crossing the Channel in ~~xxx~~ one of those dense fogs for which those waters are famous. Midway, a huge mass suddenly loomed up ahead. The Bremen was proceeding at slow speed and the lookout telephoned the warning to the bridge just in time. There was a quick and mighty twist of the wheel and the giant liner just missed the thing that loomed up in front. It was discovered to be the water-logged wreck of the

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freighter Sisto, the same Sisto which was abandoned at sea last week after the loss of nineteen lives. The Sisto has thus become a matter of concern to the shipping of all nations. She is now drifting, ~~xx~~ somewhere, a ^{menace} ~~menace~~ to everything afloat.

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Escape at sea. But death rode the hot wings over the Syrian desert between Baghdad and Damascus. Ever since Wednesday the whereabouts of a giant airliner had been a mystery. This was the great luxurious "flying hotel" built in America for the Royal Dutch Airlines. The "Flying hotel" was making a Christmas flight from Amsterdam to Java, trying for a new record, loaded with Christmas mail. Today she was found in the desert of Irak, a charred mass of wreckage. The crew of four, and three passengers, all perished in flames. What happened no one knows.

This was the same magnificent air liner that only a few weeks ago won second place in the race from London to Melbourne, piloted by the Dutchmen, ~~xx~~ Parmentier and Moll.

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The exact cause of the disaster is one of the mysteries of the air. After crossing the Mediterranean, she ran into a terrific storm, over Palestine. Yes, over Bethlehem, with her cargo of Christmas mail.

RELIEF

There's a jarring note in one bit of information that comes out of Washington today. Yesterday's news indicated that a regular love feast is brewing between the Administration and the business leaders of the nation. The news from that big Conference at White Sulphur Springs indicated that the goose is hanging high and that the celebrated dove of peace was being kept busy carrying olive branches backwards and forwards between the big shots in industry and the heads of the government. The magnificos of industry and finance were all set for hearty cooperation with the President.

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Today it is a different story. The love-feast is all off and it's all because of relief. The White Sulphur Springs Conference came out strongly for a direct dole as opposed to Washington's idea that work instead of charity should be provided for the jobless. That notion sounded with a sour note in Washington ears. The reply from the government on that is "nothing doing."

This reply has not come directly from the White House. The ~~Preside~~ President himself has issued no statement, but his

chief lieutenants mince no words about it. Harry L. Hopkins, Federal Relief Administrator, says to the big business men:

"I don't think there would be anything more harmful for America than what you suggest." And this time he's backed up heartily by Harry Ickes, Secretary of the Interior and Administrator of Public Works. He's with Mr. Hopkins all the way. Then, too, Joseph P. Kennedy, Chairman of the Securities Exchange Commission, throws up his hands in horror at the proposals from White Sulphur Springs. Another potentate on the same side of the fence is Mayor LaGuardia of New York. He says that the plan of the big business men would mean putting the unemployed on a starvation basis.

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All that sounds like pretty hot stuff. It foreshadows a row of no mean proportions. The betting is that the leaders of business, industry and finance will have plenty to say in rebuttal.

INSULL

There's one family in America that is sure of a Merry Christmas. The luck of the Insull clan holds out. The news was hardly cold about the acquittal of Sam, the head of the clan, when the long-suffering jury that had been trying brother Martin came into court late this afternoon and said: "Not guilty!".

Actually, this is the third acquittal in this vexed and long drawn out case. The first ~~man~~^P to be tried and set free by a jury was Marshal E. Samson. His trial was heard eighteen months ago.

^{Insull,}
Martin, unlike his elder brother, was tried in the state court. The charge against him was that he had embezzled Three hundred and forty-five thousand dollars. Brother Martin had a tougher fight than brother Sam. It took the federal jury only two hours to find the head of the clan not guilty. Brother Martin's ^{Insull's} jury was squabbling ~~about it~~^{for} fifteen hours. They sat up till four o'clock this morning and then were told to go to bed. At ten o'clock they were on the job again and shortly before tea time they reported their decision.

It had been expected that Samuel Insull would be one of the witnesses in his brother's favor. But in that respect the crowd

Newton
INSULL - 2

was disappointed. Brother ~~Sam~~^{He} did not take the stand. But he was in court while counsel on both sides ~~were~~ addressing the jury. And during intervals he maintained his newly acquired role of "Smiling Sam", swapping wisecracks and jovial remarks with reporters and even with lawyers.

This does not necessarily end the Affair Insull so far as the state is concerned. There are still charges in the Chicago courts pending against Samuel Insull. But the chances are that the acquittal of his brother Martin may induce the state's attorney to decide that further prosecutions will be useless.

Newton.

Dec. 21, 1934.

On Monday night, the thirty-first anniversary of that first historic flight by the Wright Brothers, I told how the newspaper reporter who wrote the first story of ~~an airplane~~ ^{man's} flight was fired by his editor -- for turning in such fantastic fiction. Then presently I received a note written on the letterhead of the Department of Taxation and Assessments of the City of New York, signed by Byron R. Newton. It read this way:- "I appreciated your pleasant reference to my old assignment at Kitty Hawk." ~~It~~ ^{that letter} was from ~~that~~ same reporter. So here was a chance to run down one of the old classics of newspaper stories. Was it true, that tale of the newspaperman who first reported an airplane flight, and then was fired for being a liar?

I got in touch with Byron Newton. He's one of New York's Commissioners of Taxation now. He's been in turn, a war correspondent in the Spanish-American War, ~~organizer~~ ^{a member} of the first aeronautical department of the United States -- ~~he was~~ publicity director for Woodrow Wilson in his campaign for the Presidency, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury and Collector of the Port of New York. ^{So,} ~~I~~ ^I asked him to come and tell us whether that old story is really true. And he's here ~~right~~ now to answer. How about it Mr. Newton?

BYRON NEWTON:-

Yes, it's true. The editors of the paper, and the public too, thought it was a daring piece of fiction when I told that I had actually seen a man fly in a machine. They regarded my story as an impudent hoax. So, I was fired ! That is, temporarily. Suspended from the paper for six weeks, without pay.

L.T.:-

How did you happen to get that unlucky assignment ?

BYRON NEWTON:-

That's interesting ! But wait a minute. First I want to clear up one misconception. The story is wrong in one detail. I did not cover the first flight the Wright Brothers made.

Nobody did.

The Wright Brothers kept ~~that~~ their experiments and their success a secret. It was not until 1908, -- five years later -- that the facts were made public, in the story that I succeeded in getting.

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Had you heard rumors of what the Wright Brothers were

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BYRON NEWTON:-

There were rumors, all right. I heard them and so did James Gordon Bennett, the famous publisher of the old ^{N.Y.} Herald. He was in Europe, and he cabled me from Paris to make a trip down to Kitty Hawk and settle once and for all, the question about those faking Wright Brothers. Mr. Bennett was a man of strange whims, and for some reason or other he had a deep suspicion of the Wright Brothers. He regarded them as the worst of those flying machine crack-pots.

L. T.:-

So, you were sent to expose the fake about flying!

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With another man I made a long trip to those isolated North Carolina sand dunes. It took us three days to get through the Dismal Swamp. When we finally got to Kitty Hawk we had to camp out in the thickest, in a hiding place infested with black-snakes, chiggers and mosquitoes, so that I could stealthily watch what was going on in the Wright Camp.

For two days and nights we watched there. And finally, on the morning of May 14th, we saw the strange giant bird rise in the air and circle about. What amazed us most was the fact that two men could be plainly seen in the machine. As the plane whirled above the southern thicket it startled the wild fowl, which swooped around it chatting and shrieking. And the wild pigs plunged crashing and splashing through woods and swampy pools. There were only three human beings to watch the newest wonder of the world. I knew I had witnessed something monumental, and I went ahead and wrote my story, telling what I had seen.

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L.T.:- Just as I should be suspended, I suppose, if I told into this microphone that I had seen a man make a trip to the moon. So I suppose I'd better stick to something less fanciful -- like The Naval Treaty for example.

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For several weeks now we've had the spectacle of that poor old Naval Treaty staggering around the ring, groggily taking one punch after another, leading with its chin and blocking with its nose. The ^{ward}~~announcement~~ from Japan that the Mikado would denounce the treaty was ^{the solar plexus punch.}~~a bad jolt in the bread-basket~~. And now comes the knock-out blow. France joins hands with Japan and says:- "Count us out too. We are not going to play anymore." Such was the gist of a statement made by France's Minister of Marine, Monsieur Francois Pietri.

However, ^{he}~~Monsieur Pietri~~ threw out a couple of words of consolation. He added that La Belle France was still willing to consider this whole question of limiting navies. ~~But that sounds pretty feeble in the face of the former announcement.~~

Japanese newspapers, of course, are putting the blame for this entire business on Uncle Sam. It seems we are an obstinate lot, so say the ^{Nipponese.}~~Japs at any rate~~. Be that as it may, with both France and Japan out of the picture that once momentous treaty, signed with such brave hopes in Washington twelve years ago, is obviously ^{prone} on ^{the canvas.}~~its last legs~~. That puts the matter squarely up to the two English speaking nations. (A good deal of rot is talked about the

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number of things that could be achieved if John Bull and
Uncle Sam could only get together and stay ^{that way. Still} ~~But~~ it is quite
plain that if the two ^{foremost} ~~former~~ Naval powers ~~in the world~~ came to a
definite agreement about naval armaments, the rest of the world would
be obliged to ^{fall} ~~get~~ in line.

SHAW

Colonel Richard C. Shaw once held one of the most dangerous jobs known to journalism. He was editor of that famous paper, "The Epitaph" of Tombstone, Arizona. (In nearly all books on the old time wild and woolly two-gun West, you will find the "Tombstone Epitaph" prominently mentioned. Colonel Shaw used to say that the only tools he used were a paste pot, a pair of scissors and a six shooter.)

The paper was called "The Epitaph" because almost all the news in it consisted of death notices, the obituary stories about the bad men of the southwest. Those two-gun heroes used to die like the leaves in Vallombrosa. The news about Colonel Shaw is that he has gone to join all the famous two-gun men whose obits he used to write. He was eighty years old. The irony is that after living through all those dangerous days, after seeing innumerable gunfighters die with their boots on, he himself passed away in New York, run over by a taxicab.

Colonel Shaw was one of the friends of that picturesque old time character, Wild Bill Hickok. One of his favorite stories

concerned Wild Bill. Hickok and the Colonel were standing up to the bar in Tombstone one evening. At the back of the bar was a huge mid-Victorian mirror surmounted with gilt cupids. Just as Wild Bill was raising a glass to his mouth he saw a face in that mirror. It was the face of a man who had sworn to kill Wild Bill at sight. The new comer had his gun in his hand.

What did Wild Bill do? If he had turned around he would have been killed instantly. Instead of that, he took swift aim in that cupid framed mirror, shooting over his shoulder, plugged his enemy twice between the eyes, and without turning a hair, finished his drink.

Colonel Shaw was also fond of quoting one of the stories from his "Tombstone Epitaph". It concerned another famous character, Wyatt Earp. The boys had elected Earp sheriff of Cochise County. When he was installed in office he made one simple statement: "Gentlemen", he said quietly, "I aim to keep the peace in Tombstone, if I have to shoot every doggone man in the place." And I guess my own best way to keep the peace will be to say: SO LONG UNTIL ~~TE~~MONDAY.