

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

The great battle of the desert takes an unexpected turn tonight. Cairo tells us that ~~the~~ huge maelstrom of tanks south of Tobruk has increased in violence, is slowing down - this because of great losses on both sides. After four or five days of it the masses of mechanism have not been able to stand the strain - or the losses.

So a new stage of the desert battle has now definitely arrived. The Imperial Forces, not having been able to complete their victory with tanks, are now bringing up infantry. And so are the Germans and Italians with the battle reverting to an older style, infantry operations. The Cairo generals plan to complete the destruction of the Axis forces by using foot troops to hold the positions the tanks have won. The garrison of the besieged fortress of Tobruk is still trying to fight its way out and join the forces of the main Imperial drive. The dispatches told today of new advances by the Tobruk troops, with a large capture of prisoners.

Meanwhile, other Imperial forces, apart from those engaged in the major clash, continued their dash across the desert. They've driven for two hundred miles, at last reports, aiming at Axis communications far from the scene of the big battle.

The British tellof the Germans rushing in reinforcements - by the air route. They say that large numbers of Nazi planes have been diverted from Europe to the conflict in North Africa. And some squadrons of the air may have been withdrawn from the Russian front, perhaps at last giving some relief to the hard pressed Red Army.

RUSSIA

The war news from Russia tells of a startling drive by the Red Army - a swift advance of ninety-five miles. And that would seem to be a most spectacular sort of drive - ninety-five miles, the Soviets hurling the Nazis back for that distance!

It occurred on the southern front, the area of Rostov - gateway to the Caucasus. The Soviet forces are described as plunging ahead, defeating the Germans and units of Italians - and this threatens the flank of the Nazi force that captured Rostov. ~~It still remains to be seen what will be the result of this forward dash by the Red Army. It would ^{appear} seem to indicate that in the southern area, it's all a war of motion - with no fixed battlelines, columns hurrying back and forth.~~

On the Moscow front, the defense is still holding, though the Red Army concedes that the panzers have driven still further ahead at the critical point just north of the city. All accounts agree that the German pressure against Moscow has continued with unabated power, in the attempt to crash through for an encirclement.

Moscow gives a new figure for Nazi losses - six million,

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put their own losses at
while the Soviets ~~lost~~ two million. Well, six million sounds mighty
big - most of the total available man-power of Germany, you'd think.

FINLAND

Another remonstrance concerning Finland was uttered today by Secretary of War Stimson, and his statement was echoed by Major General Burns, Deputy Lend-Lease Administrator. Secretary Stimson declared that Finland's action in fighting the Soviets is, in his words - "harmful to the interests of the United States." He made the point that the Finns, in their drives against the Red Army, are attacking the railroad from the Arctic port of Murmansk to Moscow. This tends to block supply lines for American aid to the Soviets. The Secretary said that Nazi Germany is using the army of Finland to ^{hamper} ~~block~~ the policy of sending American war supplies to the Red Army.

~~General Burns said that this was a cause of regret among Finland's well wishers in the United States.~~

LANDING

One of the lively war stories tonight tells of a British landing in Nazi-occupied France - a raid. Berlin describes it as an attempted British invasion - which was repelled. London counters with the revelation that a raiding party landed in France, clashed with the Germans - and got away without any loss. London describes the foray as successful, but does not say what was accomplished. This is in accordance with the British policy of silence about what they are called ^{ing} "the commandos". That word, inherited from the tactics of the South African Dutch in the Boer War, describes a new and dramatic kind of British military formation - bands of tough and hardened fighters organized to conduct raids against the Nazis in the occupied countries. (And it was one of these Commandos that carried out the hit and run attack, which Berlin describes as an invasion.)

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This commando affair, likewise raised a bit of a storm in the London House of Commons today. An angry statement was made by Member of Parliament Admiral Sir Roger J.B. Keyes, who said that he originated the Commando idea. He said everything was set for the phantom troops to go into action a year ago, and declared that

great results might have been accomplished by them -if they had been allowed to operate. But they were not permitted to go into action. And this, declared Admiral Keyes, was because of the bureaucratic red tape in the British War Office - too much stand-pat caution, checkmating new ideas.

JEWISH ARMY

There has been a good deal of talk about a Jewish army to fight the Nazis. From time to time Jewish circles have complained because the British Government has not seen fit to organize such a force - Jews from various countries to enlist and fight as part of the British army. Today in the London Parliament, it was disclosed why the project has not been adopted. The reason ^{-- lack} ~~was~~ of equipment.

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Actually - the British did plan a Jewish army at one time. Today, Lord Moyne, Secretary for Colonies, told Parliament that a year ago the British Government formulated a project to raise an army of ten thousand Jews - three thousand to be recruited in Palestine, and seven thousand to be enlisted in the United States and other countries. However, toward the end of last year, the plan was abandoned. The Secretary for Colonies gave the reason in these words, "difficulties of securing equipment."

All of this drew a vigorous attack by Labor members of Parliament. One of them said: "We are losing the cooperation of fighting Jews throughout the world whom we will need in battle. Are you prepared," he demanded, "to allow these people to organize to defend themselves, or are you going on treating the war like a football match between England and Germany?"

Another Labor member said: "There is a reluctance in the War Office to use tools that will be unpopular with Hitler - Jews and colored peoples."

And the charge was made that the British are reluctant to use the immense manpower of India for fear of putting guns into the hands of people who might later make demands.

VATICAN

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From Vatican City we have a statement that Pope Pius the Twelfth will not create any new Cardinals until the end of the war. This comes from what are called "authoritative Vatican circles."

No new Cardinals have been named during the past three years, and right now there are eighteen vacancies in the Sacred College. Several of these are American, and it ^{is} ~~has been~~ assumed that Archbishops Spellman of New York and Stritch of Chicago ^{are} ~~were~~ in line to be created Princes of the Church and receive the symbolical red hats. But now we are told that no new Cardinals will be named until the end of the war. And the reason is given in these words, "as a sign of mourning" - as a token of grief, because of the tragedy of war.

LABOR

In the railroad labor dispute, President Roosevelt stated late this afternoon that the case has been referred back to "the Emergency Fact Finding Board." This is the body which studied the railroad labor situation for a long time and then made a recommendation - a compromise in the matter of wage increases. This recommendation was turned down by the railroad unions - thereby bringing the danger of a general railroad strike. Now, however, the dispute goes back to the Fact Finding Board once again. The President explained this by saying that since the Board ~~examined~~ turned in its previous recommendation, new facts have materialized, and should be studied. The ^{Board} ~~Board~~ will investigate these new facts, and the President asks for a new report by Monday, December First.

~~This action followed a conference at the White House, in which the President talked things over with spokesmen for the railroads and for the unions. Upon emerging, the railroad and union men said they had found a way to arrive at a settlement.~~

Meanwhile, Congress began action to draft labor legislation - in accordance with an understanding of congressional leaders and the President. The White House now agrees to an anti-strike law which

embodies the principle of -- cooling off. The plan devised by the President and the legislators would call for a series of procedures in the case of any threatened strike in the realm of national defense -- four steps to be taken for mediation before a walkout could be ordered.

EARTHQUAKE

Today's earthquake was undoubtedly a tremendous cataclysm -- but where? It's a moody and dramatic fact that this afternoon the news wires in various nations flashed startling news of a stupendous convulsion of the earth -- somewhere. From London, for example, came the following by United Press: "The most severe earthquake ever recorded at the West Bromwich Observatory was noted today." The tremblor continued at a rate so severe that levers on the seismograph were thrown out of their sockets -- making it impossible to estimate the direction or the distance of the quake

Then I had a telephone call from Father Lynch seismologist at Fordham. He said that shortly after one o'clock this afternoon the recording instruments went haywire with an earthquake. He placed it at about twenty-seven hundred miles from New York, and thought the center of the quake was in the Atlantic somewhere around the Azores.

The seismologist of Pittsburgh University placed it at about three thousand miles away and thought it was either in southern Alaska or maybe in Peru.

The latest is from a city actually shaken by the quake - Lisbon. Buildings rocked, Some damage done. But no

lives lost. Obviously this was a quiver at the outer edge of the vast tremblor. Lisbon surmised that the center of the disturbance was somewhere out in the Atlantic, probably off Africa.

TORRANCE

There's a strange twist in the story of that murder trial down in Mexico - the trial of the American scientist. Dr. Arthur F. Torrance for many years has been publicized as an authority on tropical diseases - and he has gone adventuring into wild places to study the deadly and insidious maladies of jungle and Equatorial swamp. In fact he has written books about his jungle wanderings. Now at Monterrey, Mexico, he faces a court of law - accused of having killed his wife. But is the man on trial really Dr. Arthur Torrance, scientist and explorer? That question arises in a peculiar way, a peculiar shape - the shape of a glass eye.

The story relates that Dr. Torrance some little while ago married a rich widow of Kalamazoo, Michigan. For a honeymoon they went on an automobile trip to Mexico. There, the newly wedded wife was killed.

~~former marriage. The defendant claims it is all because of the spite of his stepson.~~

The trial has been going on for several days in the old City of Monterrey, and today we have the curious twist - the strange question. Is the man on trial really the ~~famous~~ Dr. Torrance, the ~~noted authority on~~ ^{student of} tropical diseases? Or is he somebody else, an imposter? This doubt arose because of the statement that the famous Doctor Torrance lost an eye in times past - and has an artificial eye. The defendant in Mexico has no such thing - no glass eye.

^{TP} It seemed all so mystifying that an investigation was begun - in which the American F.B.I. took part. ^{TP} Today the man on trial gave an explanation. He is the real Dr. Torrance, he declared. He has no glass eye, never did. He said the glass eye story was probably based on one of his books called - "Tracking Down the Enemy of Man." In this volume, telling of adventures among tropical savages, is an exciting and romantic bit - a story of how Dr. Torrance on one occasion influenced a ferocious tribe by means of his glass eye. This ~~is~~ quite in the vein of many an adventure thriller - some ingenious explorer over-awing and subjugating cannibals or

headhunters by means of some gadget of civilization like an electric battery or a ~~magnifying~~ magnifying glass or false teeth, or a glass eye. *Sometimes they are* ~~There are even tales of adventurers who have been~~ made tribal chiefs or *witch doctors* ~~official sorcerers~~, because of this kind of magic.

Anyway, the story is in Dr. Torrance's book, and it certainly does indicate that he has an artificial optic. In his explanation today he used the term - "editorial license." The glass eye story apparently was just to put a few extra thrills into a book - editorial license.

Well, many an explorer in writing a book about his travels has used a bit of license, editorial or otherwise, but it's seldom that the fiction has been ~~exposed~~ exposed by the author going on trial for murder.

OPERA

It wasn't so long ago that we were talking about the depression, but that all seems ancient history now. For example - one of the institutions hit particularly hard by the great economic downfall was the Metropolitan Opera House of New York. The depression years produced a number of lean seasons for the opera - but what do we find in the news today? The New York daily papers devoted a lot of space to a ~~sketchy~~ chronicle of the glories of last night's opening at the Met.

The place ~~was~~ jammed to capacity - four thousand, and many hundreds ^{trying} ~~tried~~ vainly to get in. ^{with} The size of the audience ~~was~~ exceeded only by its brilliance. This year's Metropolitan opening out-dazzled ~~even~~ those of the boom time years - as a social event. The news dispatches, for example, tell of the arrival of Lady Decies, and ~~tell~~ of her diamond tiara. Whereupon the United Press bulletin continues as follows: "Lady Decies additionally wore diamond earrings and a diamond necklace that reached to her waist." I like the "additionally." Then there was Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, with what the press story describes as "ropes of emeralds and diamonds around her neck."

But, of course, not all the audience occupied the Golden Horseshoe boxes so famous in the history of New York society. Some opera lovers were in the peanut gallery, and others stood. In fact, the standees started standing long before the performance began - waiting in line to get in. The first in line was a stenographer of Waterbury, Connecticut. She arrived at the Opera House at seven A.M. and waited all day. She didn't have any diamond tiara or ropes of emeralds and diamonds. The news didpatch tells us that she had a - "a folding stool, an umbrella, a flashlight and smelling salts." Why the smelling salts? I wonder whether she expected the opera to be that bad. No, that ~~could not have been~~ ^{was not} the case. For it was Mozart - "The Marriage of Figaro" - with a top ranking cast. The music was as brilliant as the audience - and there was no need of smelling salts.

Now what are you looking for Hugh, the smelling salts?