

Lowell Thomas' Broadcast  
for The Literary Digest.  
Wednesday, January 21, 1931.

INTRO.

Good Evening, Everybody:

Well, all that shouting today is about the Wickersham report on prohibition. Everybody is talking about it.

The papers tonight are printing reams about it -- but there also is a bit of other news, some of it from places that have never even heard of the Wickersham Commission. For example --

1 Strange reports are coming out  
2 of the depths of the Sahara Desert.  
3 They tell of ~~a~~ mysterious wreckage,  
4 and from what the wandering Berbers  
5 say, that wreckage may be the remains  
6 of the French dirigible Dixmunde which  
7 disappeared mysteriously in 1923.

8 ~~According to~~ The United Press  
9 reminds us that the big airship was on  
10 its way for a flight to Africa, and then it  
11 ~~just~~ vanished. The body of the captain  
12 was found in the Mediterranean, ~~sea~~,  
13 but no wreckage was ever discovered,  
14 and <sup>the great ship</sup> ~~she~~ may have drifted over the  
15 Sahara. This is perhaps the most famous  
16 mystery in the history of aviation.

## INDIA

It seems as though I never go through the day's dispatches without seeing something about India. And tonight we have a tale that sounds like the plot of a fantastic novel. It's about the former Maharajah of Indore, that fabulously wealthy potentate who has had such strange romances. You perhaps will recall that some years ago he was yanked right off his throne by the British government for the part he was charged with having played in the murder of Mumtaz Begum, a beautiful Nautch dancer who had lived at his palace. Then he married an American girl, Nancy Miller, of Seattle. And now he is being sued by a Hindu woman who claims that she and her daughter were in prison for eleven years in the former Maharajah's ~~xx~~ palace at Indore.

Well, strange stories are told about the goings on in those fabulously splendid palaces of India's great Maharajahs. I have often listened to weird rumors in India of secret crimes and wild dramas that were said to have taken place in the alabaster and marble palaces of magnificent maharajas of the romantic states of Rajputana.



1 A wild scene was staged over in  
2 London today, ~~and in~~ It took place in  
3 the sedate old House of Commons. There  
4 were howls of:--"Resign, resign!" <sup>The howls came</sup> from  
5 the Conservative benches. They ~~shouts~~  
6 <sup>howling lustily</sup> were <sup>^</sup> for the MacDonald Labor Government  
7 to step out.

8 ~~The occasion for the outburst was~~  
9 ~~a defeat which the government suffered.~~  
10 A school bill was up, and the Labor  
11 Party was backing the motion. When the  
12 question went to a vote, the government  
13 was defeated. According to the  
14 Associated Press, ~~the~~ International News  
15 Service, and United Press reports, the  
16 Conservatives think <sup>the defeat</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>^</sup> reason  
17 enough for the MacDonald government to  
18 resign, but so far the Labor ministers  
19 haven't shown any indication of taking  
20 the hint. ~~seriously.~~

## ENGLAND

All we can say about this next dispatch is that it's an old complaint -- shortage of money. Was there ever enough to do round? This time it's the British treasury that's hard up. England is facing a deficit of \$100,000,000. And, according to the International News Service, Mr. Phillip Snowden, Chancellor of the Exchequer, has ordered all departments to cut down expenses on a grand scale. And I suppose you might call it economy on a grandissimo scale when you're trying to cut expenses to the tune of a hundred million dollars!

## GERMANY

Now comes confirmation of a rumor that has been floating around and that had the right ring.

It was reported that the German and the French governments were talking about the possibilities of Germany getting a big loan from France. Well, the International News Service tells us that high German authorities say it's true. Germany is trying to get a loan from France, and it's reported that the French are inclined to shell out the francs.

Interesting item, that!

It wasn't so long ago when the only currency France and Germany had to offer each other came out of the muzzles of guns.



## ITALY

It looks from this next dispatch as though Mussolini were still having his way about everything. He has been demanding an increase of birth rate in Italy. Last year it fell two per cent. But now, the New York Evening World tells us it is going up. This is shown by figures just given out at Rome.

There are in Italy some twenty thousand families of more than ten children each. Which means that twenty thousand papas are buying shoes for a quarter of a million youngsters. But Il Duce insists that buying shoes for the baby is what papas ~~xx~~ are for. Perhaps he's right.

## NICARAGUA

Yes, there is more trouble in Nicaragua. And this time it's about a band of one hundred and fifty of Sandino's rebels who attacked a town defended not by Uncle Sam's Marines but by the Nicaraguan National Guard. The attack was beaten off.



1 I saw a sensational picture today, in  
2 *fast* as thrilling a picture as I have ever  
3 seen. A picture of a train wreck--a  
4 train of cars loaded with gasoline.

5 The Accident Bulletin of the New  
6 York Bureau of Explosives <sup>proclaims it</sup> ~~says that it is~~  
7 the most wonderful picture of a combined  
8 wreck and fire ~~that they have ever made -~~  
9 ~~seen~~--and they've seen a lot of them.

10 A gasoline train was rolling along  
11 at ~~thirty miles~~ thirty miles an hour when a  
12 rail broke. Nobody was to blame and the  
13 accident wasn't <sup>a</sup> ~~tragic~~ <sup>eddy</sup> ~~eddy~~. But it certainly  
14 was spectacular. ~~man~~ Luckily somebody  
15 had a camera and snapped a picture  
16 when the big crash happened. *And, what a picture!*

17 That <sup>extraordinary</sup> picture appears in the new  
18 Literary Digest that comes out tomorrow.

## BONUS

Now for a dispatch that interests me a lot. I've been getting an endless flood of letters asking for the latest news about the soldier's bonus. A lot of the boys want the government to pay the amounts still coming ~~in~~ on the bonuses, and pay them now. Well, the whole question is still being debated in Washington.

And today, according to the International News Service, a parade of veterans swooped down on the capitol in Washington urging that something be done. They marched through the streets with flags flying and bands playing, and then drew up in front of the building with the great grey dome.

A couple of Congressmen came out and addressed them. The two Congressmen are advocates of the immediate payment of the bonus, and they told the veterans they are making the hardest fight they know how, to see that the ex-soldiers get the money as soon as possible.

## HOUSE OF DAVID

A treasure hunt was on today.

Two rival groups are out scouting for \$400,000. This fortune is said to have been buried by King David, I mean the founder of the House of David, spectacular Michigan prophet who founded a cult.

His followers are now having a grand free-for-all among themselves and have gone to court. In the proceedings it was revealed that King Davis had buried about \$400,000. Just where, seems to be a bit uncertain. But, according to the International News Service, both factions have equipped themselves with picks and shovels and they are out digging furiously.



Along comes a thing that

1 ~~Well~~, I always thought ~~things~~  
2 ~~like this next one~~ occurred only in  
3 novels. ~~and plays.~~

4 William Wysong and Mrs. James Bucy,  
5 of Indianapolis, knew each other for  
6 for years. She was much older than he,  
7 and ~~almost~~ <sup>almost</sup> regarded him <sup>as</sup> a son. And  
8 now she discovers that he is her son!

9 The United Press tells us that  
10 Wysong was adopted by another family  
11 when he was a child. His mother  
12 married again and lost track of him.  
13 And it's by pure accident that they've  
14 just found out that they are mother and  
15 son.

16 Many <sup>a writer of fiction</sup> ~~an author~~ has used a theme  
17 ~~something like that, in a work of fiction.~~  
18 and now it <sup>occurs</sup> ~~happens~~ in real life.

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1 The Juneau Empire tells us that  
2 there have been several new gold strikes  
3 in Alaska, in the Fairbanks district.  
4 One ~~is~~ on a creek called Lower Goldstream,  
5 and the other on ~~the~~ Little Eldorado--  
6 creeks that have already yielded millions  
7 in yellow nuggets and dust.

8 The story also states that a large  
9 fleet of gold dredges is still forging  
10 its way through the pay gravel of the  
11 creeks around Fairbanks.

12 A ~~man~~ pal of mine once took out a  
13 fortune of about \$50,000 from one of the  
14 creeks in that district, in a few weeks.  
15 Then he <sup>mashed</sup> ~~went in~~ to Fairbanks and blew it  
16 all in on organizing and supporting a  
17 midnight ~~team~~ sun baseball team, that  
18 played its games around midnight, during  
19 the summer months when it never gets  
20 dark.

1 I had an embarrassing experience  
2 today. I met a man from Podunk. And  
3 Podunk is a name of sorrow and thorns  
4 for me.

5 Some of you may have heard me say,  
6 in a rash moment, that there was no such  
7 place as Podunk, and I got thoroughly  
8 ~~hauled out~~ <sup>called down</sup> for that. Anyway, I was  
9 talking today with a gentleman from  
10 Podunk, Connecticut. He lives in  
11 Hartford now. In fact, he is H. C. Parsons,  
12 a prominent Hartford theatre owner. But  
13 he was born and raised in the village  
14 of Podunk, <sup>Podunk,</sup> Connecticut.

15 He looked at me in a sad way and  
16 assured me there was a Podunk, and told  
17 me stories of his boyhood among Podunk's  
18 hills and dales. ~~But~~ But I don't want to  
19 bring up that fighting subject of Podunk  
20 again. I merely want to say that Mr.  
21 Parsons <sup>of Podunk</sup> picked out my News Item of the  
22 Day for me.

23 It's about an airplane in Africa.  
24 The pilot was one of Germany's greatest  
25 aces during the War--the famous Udet.



1 Well, Udet was flying low over open  
2 country. The plane swooped down to  
3 within a few feet of the ground. A  
4 bad-tempered old lion was down there, and  
5 when he saw that plane come near him  
6 he just crouched and sprang, and his  
7 claws got hold of one of the wings.

8 Now, when a lion gets tangled up  
9 with a <sup>an</sup> fast airplane it's liable to be  
10 too bad for the lion. I don't know what  
11 happened to old Leo out there, but I do  
12 know what happened to the plane. The  
13 lion's claws badly damaged one wing and  
14 the machine <sup>came to earth, and</sup> went bumping along.

15 It had just come to a stop when a  
16 rhinoceros charged it. Old Mr. Rhino  
17 hit the plane like a tank in full cry  
18 and there was a crashing and splintering  
19 of wood. Then the rhino backed off,  
20 gave a few snorts, stuck his tail in the  
21 air, which is a way rhinos have when they  
22 are angry, and then he charged again.  
23 He reduced that plane to kindling wood,  
24 and the men inside were lucky to escape  
25 with their lives.

1 "I wish I had been there to see  
2 that," Mr. Parsons meditated. So far  
3 as I know, we never had anything like  
4 that happen at Podunk."  
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1 Well, & Great Guns, I can sympathize  
2 with this fellow. He was robbed of his  
3 voice. Luckily he was not a radio  
4 news gatherer, but on the other hand  
5 he was a movie actor, and movie actors  
6 need voices too in these days of  
7 talkies. However, he wasn't <sup>exactly</sup> rendered  
8 speechless. ~~like that~~ It was merely  
9 a case that his voice was separated  
10 from his personality. He was himself.  
11 But his voice wasn't his own.

12 HOW COME? ~~XXXX~~ Say you?

13 Well, here's how, say I.

14 Over in London a film actor  
15 sued a motion picture company. He had  
16 made a silent film. They turned it  
17 into a talkie. That is, they just made  
18 sound strips to go along with the  
19 action, but they didn't use him to make  
20 the sound strip. They used another  
21 actor. And in the picture he was put  
22 there on the screen, but he was talking  
23 with somebody else's voice.

24 He said that was all wrong,  
25 because his voice should be a part of



1 his personality and as an actor he  
2 was selling his personality to the  
3 public. To tack another man's voice  
4 on to him was just depriving him of a  
5 part of his personality. And the  
6 court decided in his favor.

7 That curious ~~little~~ story is told  
8 in the new Literary Digest, the one  
9 that will be on the stands tomorrow.  
10 The Digest quotes the London Evening  
11 Standard, and goes on to give some very  
12 interesting things about the voices of  
13 famous people.

14 The giant Bismark, the man of  
15 blood and iron, had a small piping  
16 voice.

17 The poet Tennyson ~~xxxxxx~~  
18 boomed when he talked. Byron had an  
19 affected drawl. Shelley squeaked.

20 The Duke of Wellington who  
21 conquered Napoleon, had a voice of  
22 child-like softness and Napoleon - well,  
23 nobody seems to know quite how he talked.  
24 It is known, of course, that when he got  
25 excited he talked French with a strong