

LOWELL THOMAS BROADCAST FOR LITERARY DIGEST

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INTRO

Thanks Neil for those kind words. Good Evening, Everybody. Yes, it is just a year today that I first went on the air to tell you folks the news. It really doesn't seem like a year. The time has gone by like a flash.

But I, well I want to make a sort of confession, I mean about this year. It has been one grand education - for me.

When I began reeling off the news a year ago, I was a greenhorn to say the least. I didn't exactly know what it was all about.

I was a newspaper man. I was accustomed to handling the news, but I didn't realize how little that meant on a nation-wide broadcast. The daily local, paper is one thing. We have to depend on it in a host of ways. But this broadcast hasn't any local angle at all. So I found right off the bat that I had plenty to learn. The editors of the Literary Digest for years have been conducting a nation-wide journal of the news. They were the ones to give me a national slant on the news. So I've

got plenty to thank them for. And that's one of the things I want to do - right now.

And then there's somebody else I've got to tahnk, a lot of people, you folks. You have been making it your very kind duty to teach me. I have had countless tips, countless wise words of advice. Letters have come in. They have set me right on lots of things. They have told me how to improve the presentation of the news. Those thousands of letters have been one long continuous correspondence course, teaching me what you folks liked. And I've tried to learn as well as I could. There have been letters of correction, showing me where I was wrong. I have taken quite a few on the chin, and learned to like it. Then there are letters saying - lay off this, - and - why don't you give us more of that. And don't let's forget those genial souls that write in and give me a story to pass on to the rest of the folks, maybe some curious fact of history, maybe some insight into a current problem, or maybe a Tall Story, a whopper with a big laugh in it.

In a way I feel that I am doing this Literary Digest news broadcast in collaboration. Yes, in collaboration with the newspapers and press associations, Heaven bless them, also in collaboration with the Literary Digest editors and also with you folks. And I want to thank you for that education that you've been giving me for one solid year.

And now let's see if I can show that that education has done me any good. For instance there's Cal Coolidge.

1 Well, it looks as though Cal
2 isn't choosing to run again, and there's
3 a good deal of political commotion down
4 in Washington. It is caused, ^{remarks the Assoc. Press,} by that
5 statement which appears in the papers
6 today in which ex-president Coolidge
7 declares distinctly and decisively that
8 he is not a candidate ~~of~~ ^{for} the Republican
9 nomination for 1932, and he urges *all good and true*
10 Republicans to back President Hoover
11 to the limit.

12 The United Press explains that
13 this statement by ex-president Coolidge
14 is printed in an article in the Saturday
15 Evening Post. The former president
16 points out that it has always been the
17 custom for a political party to give
18 the president a nomination for a second
19 term. He says that's a good custom, so he
20 urges the Republican party to support
21 President Hoover with all its strength.

22 The International News Service
23 has gathered a bit of comment from
24 various sources in Washington. The
25 regular Republicans are tickled. "That

1 settles it" they are shouting, and they
2 add that they never had any doubt that
3 the Republican party would renominate
4 President Hoover in 1932.

5 The Progressive Republicans are
6 not so enthusiastic. They also didn't
7 have any idea that ex-president
8 Coolidge was going to come out as a
9 candidate, but they are not so strong
10 for President Hoover. As for the
11 Democrats, they say it doesn't mean
12 anything much. *And there you are.*

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1 Now comes one of the most amazing
2 bits of wild, barbaric drama I have ever
3 encountered. It's from a story in
4 this week's Literary Digest, entitled
5 "AMONG THE HUMAN LEOPARDS". That Digest
6 article tells about an extraordinary
7 man, Doctor Albert Schweitzer, a learned
8 German physician, a theologian, a
9 musician, who is one of the great ~~XX~~
10 authorities on the subject of the composer
11 Bach.

12 Well, this most erudite scholar
13 took himself to Africa some years ago
14 to live among the natives of the deepest
15 bush. He founded a hospital ~~at Lambarene~~ ^{in the} ~~at Lambarene~~ ^{in the} ~~at Lambarene~~ ^{in the}
16 of equatorial West Africa, and there he
17 has been serving the natives of the
18 tribes, trying to cure them of their
19 maladies. The Literary Digest quotes from
20 a book in which Dr. Schweitzer tells of
21 his amazing experiences. The book is
22 called "THE FOREST HOSPITAL AT LAMBARENE".
23 In it we are told of the human leopards
24 whose story is as strange and gruesome
25 as any that comes out of that dark land

1 of mystery.

2 The human leopards are a native
3 secret society, the members of which
4 believe they are leopards and that
5 therefore they must kill men. They try
6 to behave altogether like leopards. They
7 go about on all fours. They fasten to
8 their hands and feet real leopards' claws
9 or iron imitations so that they leave
10 behind them a trail something like that
11 of a leopard. They spring upon their
12 victims as leopards do.

13 The people are in dreadful terror
14 of ~~xxxxxxx~~ this mad, crazy band ^{of secret killers.}

15 Dr. Schweitzer, in that book,
16 "THE FOREST HOSPITAL AT LAMBARENE", tells
17 us of a native girl near his hospital.
18 For some reason she seemed to live in
19 mortal terror of the doctor. She ran away
20 every time she saw him. What was she
21 afraid of? Well, they inquired and
22 found out. This girl had seen a patient
23 come into the hospital. He was too sick
24 to be cured. He died. She saw them
25 carry him out. She had noticed the doctor

1 was with the man the whole night before
2 he died. She believed the doctor had
3 killed him. She was convinced that the
4 doctor was a white human leopard. She
5 reasoned ~~xxxxxxx~~ that the authorities
6 punished the black human leopards when
7 they caught them but because the white
8 human leopard was white, he was allowed
9 to remain free.

10 That is an example of the problems
11 which face the white physician and scholar
12 who is devoting his life to the black
13 natives of the tropical jungles of West Africa.

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1 England, along with its economic
2 crisis, is having a bit of a political
3 crisis, too. The question ~~is~~ ^{which} ~~now~~ the
4 heads of the Government are debating is
5 whether the present cooperative cabinet
6 should carry on, or whether a general
7 election should be called to form a new
8 government.

9 The Associated Press reports
10 that Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald,
11 called at Buckingham Palace this afternoon
12 and had a conference with King George
13 who has just returned from his vacation
14 in Scotland. It is believed that the
15 King told the Prime Minister to carry on
16 --that his Majesty is against the idea of
17 a general election right ~~now~~ and thinks
18 the present government should stay on
19 the job until the ~~present~~ financial
20 crisis is over.

21 Well Prime Minister MacDonald seems
22 to be in a tight corner. His cabinet is
23 split on the subject of the general
24 election. The Conservatives want to call
25 an election right away. They want the
Government to step down,--put the matter

1 ~~Yes, and~~ They had a disturbance in London
2 today. A committee of Communists
3 presented a petition containing two
4 hundred and fifty thousand names to the
5 House of Commons. The petition
6 denounced the cut ^{in the} ~~of~~ dole which the
7 Economy Government has made.

8 There was a Communist meeting
9 in Hyde Park. When it was over the
10 Red delegation went to the House of
11 Parliament. That was all right. The
12 petition was presented in due form, but
13 while this was going on ~~x~~ ^{the} crowd got
14 out of hand. It consisted largely of
15 Red sympathizers and they broke through
16 the police lines. The London Bobbies
17 charged and there was a lively scuffle
18 before order was restored.

1 before the voters. The Liberals are
2 absolutely opposed to this. They don't
3 want an election now. And the Laborites
4 are of the same opinion as the Liberals.
5 The Labor leaders think this is a bad
6 time to go before the voters.

7 ^{United Press}
8 ~~The International News Service~~
9 reports that the problem is being discussed
10 with considerable heat in the British
11 cabinet. There will be a cabinet meeting
12 tomorrow in an endeavor to decide what
13 to do about that election proposition.
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1 Over in Holland tonight there's
2 a bit of agitation in royal circles.
3 Queen Wilhemina has called off all
4 official audiences. This is on account
5 of communist demonstrations which have
6 been staged.

7 The International News Service
8 explains that the Queen ~~was~~^{is} paying one
9 of her regular visits to the big seaport
10 city of Amsterdam and the Communists have
11 taken the occasion to make a loud noise.
12 Crowds of reds gathered before the
13 Palace and shouted: "Down with Royalty."
14 They passed out handbills calling upon
15 the people to storm the palace. A crowd
16 of loyal supporters of the Queen
17 gathered and they gave resounding cheers
18 for her Majesty. But when they were
19 gone the Communists got busy again with
20 their chorus of protest.

Victor Berge.
Boat with
Octopus while
pearl diving

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1 Well, this evening we're going
2 to have a real marvel, a romantic marvel.
3 It's a pearl diver's fight at the bottom
4 of the sea with a giant octopus. Yes,
5 that's ^{right in line with those} ~~quite as~~ extraordinary ~~as anythings~~
6 ~~you can find~~ in that ^{exciting} Literary Digest Book
7 of Marvels.

8 But first let me introduce Victor
9 Berge. If we had television you'd see
10 him right here beside me, a big blond
11 strapping Scandinavian sailor man. He
12 looks the part of a ^{chap} ~~man~~ who has been a
13 pearl diver, and who might have had a
14 fight with an octopus or any of the
15 denizens of the South Sea.

16 Victor Berge ran away from his
17 Swedish home when a boy and shipped as
18 a sailor. Then he got tired of the Jack
19 Tar's life and went into pearl fishing
20 on Thursday Island. ^{For} Twenty-five years
21 he led a wild life in those wild parts
22 seeking ^{the lustrous} ~~a glowing~~ gem that lies within
23 the oyster at the bottom of lonely
24 seas. He tells me he made a fortune
25 out of pearls, but he spent it the way

1 the proverbial sailor spends his money.
2 So he came to the United States and got
3 out a book about his adventures. It is called
4 ^{Pearl Diver and} was written for him by Henry ~~W. Chan~~
5 Lanier, a well known writer and editor.

6 ~~Mr~~ But now let's get along with
7 that battle with the octopus. Tell us
8 something about it, Mr. Berge. What
9 did you do to the octopus and what did
10 the octopus do to you?

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1 All right. But i'm afraid that
2 some people are liable to think that
3 ~~that~~ battle with the Octopus is just
4 another one of those tall stories. They
5 might want to make me a member of that
6 tall story Club of yours. But it's all
7 the truth, ^{Mates,} and nothing else. Here's
8 how it happened.

9 We were off the coast of Borneo,
10 and I was in my diving suit at the
11 bottom of the sea looking for pearl
12 oysters. The water was about twenty
13 fathoms deep. I just stooped over when
14 I felt something touch me lightly on
15 the left arm. It was just instinct and
16 under-water training that saved my
17 life. As quick as a flash I grabbed my
18 razor sharp knife ^{from} ~~my~~ my belt and slashed
19 out again and again, and I was lucky
20 enough to cut in two a couple of long
21 slimy arms that were crawling snake-
22 like around me. And right away I knew
23 I was having a battle with a giant
24 octopus. I felt something grabbing my
25 ankles. Two other arms had ~~xxxx~~ hold

1 of my legs and they pulled with a jerk
2 that almost threw me down.

3 There isn't any way that I can
4 tell you the horror of that moment. I
5 could see a mass of ^{waving}~~wavering~~ squirming
6 arms.

7 I tried to cut my ankles free,
8 but as I bent over, the creature jerked
9 me so violently that I had to straighten
10 up to keep my footing. My head was
11 banged against my helmet and it almost
12 knocked me out. One jerk threw me
13 against a rock and almost pounded the
14 breath out of me. I couldn't get free.
15 The octopus had me. I kept slashing
16 away at the creature but it did no good.

17 I was afraid to pull my emergency
18 line because there was a good chance that
19 my air-pipe and life line might ~~have~~ get
20 tangled up in the jagged coral that was
21 near me.

22 More arms were reaching out to
23 take hold of me. I kept fighting ~~my~~ with my
24 knife, slashing and cutting. But I began
25 to feel ~~xx~~ with a cold despair. ~~that~~

I felt could never cut off all the arms of the
2 octopus. ~~It~~ I could scarcely see anything
3 now. The black inky fluid ~~from~~ ^{from} the
4 octopus was making the water seem like
5 night. A slight current in the water
6 would carry away the ink for a moment. Then
7 ~~and~~ I would catch an indistinct glimpse
8 of the octopus. The creature was
9 coming nearer to me. ~~Then~~ ^{the} water cleared
10 for a moment and I got a close look
11 at that disgusting mass of squirming
12 legs, ~~and then~~ I found myself gazing into
13 a pair of diabolical eyes. The octopus
14 has the weirdest most terrifying eyes
15 of any creature in the world. That
16 decided me. No matter whether my air-
17 pipe and life-line did become snarled, ~~no~~
18 ~~the quarrel~~ nothing mattered now. I
19 caught hold of the safety line and gave
20 four jerks, meaning - pull until it
21 breaks. A moment later I had a wild
22 feeling of sailing through space. I
23 don't remember any more. I was unconscious.
24 Up above my partners pulled
25 frantically. They couldn't get me up.

1 They tugged with all their might.
 2 Something was holding me down there. They
 3 didn't know it was the octopus. They
 4 didn't know that devilish creature still
 5 had ~~a~~ hold of my ankles and had taken a
 6 firm grasp of the rocks with his other
 7 arms. ^{Yes,} It was a tug of war:- The men
 8 in the boat against the octopus, ~~on the~~
 9 ~~bottom - and I was~~ ^{with me} in the middle. And
 10 the octopus was stronger than the men.
 11 What they finally did was to take
 12 advantage of the way the boat was heaving
 13 in the swell of the sea. One hitch of
 14 the rope, and the ~~o~~upward swing of the
 15 boat as a wave came rolling ^{and that}
 16 broke the dead-lock. ^{Yes} They hauled me to
 17 the surface and there they saw those
 18 ugly arms wrapped around my legs. ~~and~~
 19 ~~down~~ ^{Yes,} there was the octopus. He was
 20 still holding on to me. One of the
 21 men jumped into the water and with a
 22 quick swing of the knife cut loose
 23 the grasping arms, and I was hauled
 24 aboard - still unconscious.

25 Well, that may sound like a tall
 story all right, but it's as true as
 gospel. That's the way things happen
 among the pearl divers in the South Seas.

MUSHROOM

You've got me so excited Mr. Berge, that I can almost feel one of those grasping arms around my ankles.

Now let's see what's next. Every so often in the day's news there come tidings of some chap who has raised a record-breaking potato, or an enormous pumpkin, or something of the sort. Those championship vegetables and fruits are pretty common, but here's something that does seem almost startling. It's a champion mushroom and it certainly is a whopper.

At Fitchburg, Massachusetts, says the International News Service, Joseph Semmino, is displaying today a mushroom that weighs thirty pounds. It is 12-feet around and is 15" thick. Yes, sir, that's some mushroom, and Joe could go on eating it for a week or so.

Well, there's just time left to say that my radio anniversary and New Year is up now - and

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.