

ENGLAND

Good Evening, Everybody:

Tonight is a big night over in England. There are big doings in Parliament. All the M.P.'s were in their benches and there was a state of tense excitement. A Major political crisis had come and nobody knew just what was going to happen.

The fate of Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald's Labor Government hung in the balance. They were having a vote that was to decide whether the Labor party would be allowed to go on ruling the British Empire. The fight was over a bill that has to do with the working man's right to strike. The Labor Government had been pushing the bill, and if beaten they would have had to resign.

A messenger has just handed me a message. It's from the International News Service, and it reads:

The House of Commons Vote has been taken and resulted in 277 votes for the bill and 250 against it. This is considered a decisive victory for Ramsay MacDonald and the Labor Party in England.

ITALY

From Italy comes word of an avalanche in the Italian Alps which swept down upon a file of Italian soldiers. A detachment of the 3rd Alpine Regiment while engaged in maneuvers, were caught in a tremendous mass of snow and ice which slid down the mountain side. It isn't known ~~xx~~ exactly what happened to them.

But another detachment went out to look over them and they too were caught in an avalanche. According to the International News Service, of the second detachment the captain and twelve soldiers were killed.

ALBANIA

Across the Adriatic from Italy they had an earthquake. In fact, earthquakes are getting rather too frequent these days. I wonder what's up? At any rate today's earthquake news comes from Albania. According to the International News Service five hundred houses were shaken down in the town of Koritza. Many people were injured and at least four persons were known to have lost their lives. The quake was exceedingly violent and communications are badly disrupted. So, accurate news is coming through slowly from the stricken region.

The Associated Press cables from Berlin that another violent tremor is reported in Upper Silesia and still another in the iron mining region of Poland near the large city of Krakow.

Earthquakes are certainly uncanny things. They make us feel how puny is the strength of man. At least they do me. I have never been through a serious quake, but for a short time, once, I lived on what is called an earthquake belt, where we had them every day.

It was in Kabul, the capital of the remote country of Afghanistan, in the heart of Central Asia. Four of us, all

Americans, were there as the guests of the King. We were living in one of the King's guest houses. The tremors usually came at almost the same hour, every evening right while we were having dinner.

Above us hung a huge glass chandelier, a marvelous thing that had come down across Central Asia from Russia. When the quake came this chandelier would rock back and forth in alarming fashion, and we would jump from the table and dash outdoors at top speed. After a few minutes we would go back and resume our dinner, but I know I always felt just a bit more humble after one of those quakes. It made me realize that I didn't amount to so very much after all, and that I was merely a speck on a great planet, whirling through space.

MEXICO

Well, folks, I feel that I ought to try to tell you this next one in a really oratorical way, something like this: In these days of world peace and naval disarmament, when the time has come to beat swords into ploughshares and battleships into tractors, it is indeed heartening to come upon a nation that is doing a real bit of naval disarmament. There is one country that is not merely reducing its war fleet, but actually abolishing its war fleet. And that country is Mexico. Said he with grand gestures. Well, at any rate, the Associated Press cables from Mexico City that the Mexican government down there aren't all that they might be, and the authorities want to save money. So they plan to eliminate the expense of keeping the Mexican fleet.

We are further informed that the Mexican navy consists of one lonesome ancient small cruiser, two equally ancient, and still smaller gunboats, one transport and four coast guard launches.

No amount of description can do justice to the rusty antiquity of these ships of war. But one simple story may suffice:

During the revolutionary troubles a couple of years ago the Mexican fleet, lying at anchor in the harbor of Vera Cruz, was commanded to put to sea. And in order to get those men-of-war to move they actually had to put sails on them. And so the Mexican Navy, under a full spread of canvas, sailed out of the harbor of Vera Cruz.

Well, I suppose any disarmament is better than none, and as I said, it's a heartening and inspiring sign in these days of world peace. And you never can tell. Maybe Mexico is setting an example in naval disarmament, an example which John Bull and Uncle Sam will instantly follow - maybe, Manana.

DIGEST - NIAGARA FALLS

Now we come to a bit of prophecy, and its about that great old friend of the whole country - Niagara Falls. Another big crash is predicted. One occurred a couple of weeks ago when an anormous chunk of rock broke off from the ledge of the American falls. Well, that made a considerable dent in the face of ~~the~~ Eastern America's principal scenic wonder. And there may be another great dent before long.

Five or six years ago an engineer conducted a survey of the Falls. The water at that time was very low, and he discovered a crack in the rock near Luna Island. That crack was in just the place where the recent big break occurred.

But that wasn't the only crack which the engineer found. He says that a similar break in the rock occurs at another place -- near Prospect Point. Well, the inference is that another big rock slide may take place at this point too. It may happen within weeks, or it may take years before the weakened rock gives way.

This important information regarding Niagara is contained in an article in the new Literary Digest -- the January 31st issue, which will be on the news stands tomorrow. I had a look at an

advance copy today.

The Digest quotes the New York Times and gives a whole series of interesting facts about the change that's taking place and the further changes that may take place in Niagara Falls.

The Keynote of that Digest article is a line which the editors reprint from the New York Herald Tribune, a line which, as the Digest remarks, has a touch of sadness. Here it is: NO ONE WILL EVER AGAIN SEE OLD NIAGARA FALLS AS WE HAVE SEEN IT.

And by the way, you'll enjoy the two magnificent pictures in the new Digest - pictures of that big cataclysm at Niagara Falls.

RED CROSS

Down in Washington Judge John Barton Payne, National Chairman of the Red Cross, appeared today before the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives. According to the United Press, he told the Committee that the Red Cross will refuse to accept twenty-five million dollars even if Congress does appropriate that amount for food for people who were hit by the drought last summer. ~~You will recall that~~ President Hoover is opposed to the idea of the government supplying food to the drought sufferers. The President wants the Red Cross to come to the rescue and has started a big Red Cross drive for ten million dollars. It was then proposed in Congress that the Red Cross should have charge of the relief work, but that the government should put up the money and the amount should be \$25,000,000. This has been the subject of quite a row between the President and Congress.

Well, Judge Payne, head of the Red Cross, has come out on the President's side by announcing that the Red Cross will refuse to accept any money that Congress may appropriate. According to the International News Service, he declared that the Red

Gross is in a position to do the job all by itself. He said that if the Red Cross ever permits the government to provide it with funds for relief work, why then the effectiveness of the organization will be ably handicapped and it may lose its position as the direct agency of the private citizen in helping his less fortunate fellow citizens.

When the Senators over in the capitol heard that the Red Cross has refused that twenty-five million dollars appropriation, which the Senate is backing, there was an immediate storm of protest. Both President Hoover and the Red Cross were denounced bitterly.

According to the Associated Press the Senators opposed to Mr. Hoover are attacking the administration in one loud raucous chorus.

NIGHT CLUBS

Although this next dispatch mentions night clubs, it isn't about any gay jollification. A man was assaulted by a thug in Central Park, New York City. The thug stabbed him 20 times. He is in a hospital in a serious condition. And it so happens that he is the brother of the proprietor of a big New York night club. Yes, and the police say this incident is connected with the case of the big battle, which I told you about the other evening, which was staged in one of New York's flashiest night clubs. In that fracas a well-known gambler was beaten up and stabbed.

The New York Evening Post informs us that orders have been issued at police headquarters to break up the connection between gangsters and big expensive night clubs where some of the so-called elite of the town are said to have been hobnobbing with gunmen of the underworld.

SHADOW

Now comes one that reminds us of the old story of a man who pursued a shadow. This time it really happened, at any rate, a half a dozen cops pursued a shadow.

A New York night watchman reported that he had seen a man on a fire escape high up in one of the tall buildings among the lights of Broadway. The police made a thorough search and came to the conclusion that they had been chasing a shadow. The New York Evening Post explains that all the watchman had seen was a tricky shadow caused by the intricate lights of the Great White Way,

AIRPLANE

I want to send out a call right here for an aviator who flew over the town of Sunbury, Pennsylvania, last night. He came down low and went skimming over the house tops with his motor wide open. He went hedge-hopping over Sunbury with a terrific roar. According to the Associated Press, that night flier wakened everybody in the town, and those citizens were plenty hopping mad ~~xx~~ you can bet, mad until they found that there was a big fire in a local coal plant. Then they realized that the aviator had been giving them a fire alarm.

The people of Sunbury hadn't any idea who he was. He just flew in and out of the night and disappeared into the night. But the folks in Sunbury are not satisfied. They want to find that rider of the night wind and thank him for zooming down and roaring out that fire alarm.

PETTICOATS

I wonder what my Aunt Bedelia would say about this? She lives out in Oregon, and if she's "listening-in" she'll just say, "Land sakes alive". Because I can recall when my Aunt Bedelia would raise her nose if she saw a lady who happened to have a fraction of an inch of her petticoat showing below her skirt. That was Aunt Bedelia's idea of just plain sloppiness.

However, I have an Associated Press dispatch here which states that the height of fashion is to have an inch or two of underskirt showing. Over in Paris the decree of fashion for daytime ~~star~~ dresses reads like this: "Demure crepe frocks with ruffled petticoats of cream or pale pink lace showing below the hem". And that means that ladies will have their underskirts hanging down and showing. What do you know about that?

Now, that may be the latest fashion, but according to my Aunt Bedelia, it's just plain sloppiness, and it will never never do.

END

Now for just a word about travel. My work has always kept me dashing about the globe and I don't know anything more exhilarating than going somewhere, be it to Zanzibar or Timbuctoo, or Niagara Falls. The wanderlust is something that some of us just can't resist.

But what I started out to say was that there is a town in Poland where the whole population suddenly got the wanderlust. The whole blooming town got the itching foot and began traveling here and there on the railroad. Some went to visit distant relatives. Others took a train ride for the fun of it.

The reason is that in the town of Szubin, Poland, the station master, John Neizgodsky, went haywire, as aviators say, and was seized with a sudden and peculiar idea. In fact John became just a bit cuckoo. His business supposedly was to sell railroad tickets. But John suddenly got big hearted and started to give them away.

In fact, John issued free tickets to anybody who wanted to do any place. So the people of Szubin just naturally flocked down to the ticket office to get those free tickets, and that's

when they started to take rides on the train. Nor can you blame them for feeling this sudden appreciation of the joys of travel, and for suddenly being seized with the wanderlust.

Yes, I may have done more than my share of traveling, but I seldom got a ticket and often how I would have welcomed the acquaintance of a big hearted ticket agent like John Neizgodsky of the city of Szubin.

Right now I'm going down the street to take the crosstown trolley home, and something tells me I'm not going to get a free ride. Too bad there aren't more John Neizgodskyes. Anyway, SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.