

L.T. - SUNOCO. FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1936.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

Christmas news tonight is tranquil and peaceful. In this country of ours the merriment of Christmas can be judged by the report from the airlines -- a report that tells of a rush of Christmas presents by air. All planes available were in service, and the heaps of presents were so big that they tore the seats out of passenger planes to make place for last minute Christmas cargo.

Yesterday, our Christmas Eve tidings from abroad had a tone of worry and anxiety instead of gladness -- the old World rocking with menace. But tonight even China with its fantastic troubles and perplexities, gives us news in the Christmas spirit.

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Yee, This was a day of gladness in far off China, joyful celebrations in Shanghai, Hanchow and Nanking. A Merry Christmas indeed -- although the slant-eyed celestials were not commemorating the Christian festival aspect of the day. There are Chinese Christians, of course, but the jubilation of the teeming millions did not concern the Star of Bethlehem. It didn't even have anything to do with Confucius. It concerned -- Generalissimo Chaing-Kai-Shek.

(For the head of the Chinese Central Government has been released, set free by his captor, the rebellious Marshal Chang. Nanking announced today that the Generalissimo had left Marshal Chang's headquarters at Sian and flown by airplane to Loyang -- liberated. He is accompanied by his attractive Americanized wife. She it was who had flown to Marshal Chang's headquarters of revolt to plead for her husband. Strangest of all -- we are told that General and Mrs. Chaing-Kai-Shek are accompanied by the revolting Marshal Chang. All three will fly from Loyang to the government center at Nanking. The Marshal, who staged the revolt and seized the head of the government, is giving himself up to face the music

in Nanking. It's one of those weird Chinese reversals, quite incomprehensible on this side of the Pacific.)

The news up to this present moment does not make clear just how all this came about. The story is brief and fragmentary, saying that Marshal Chang has yielded unconditionally -- no concessions to him. Although -- that hardly seems probable. There must be some kind of settlement.

Maybe all this comes about because of Generalissimo's wife inducing the Marshal to free her husband and come to terms; - Victory of a wife's devotion. Or, maybe it was the mass mobilization of Nanking troops ready for the attack. They were about to start the storm of battle, the zero hour was at hand -- when the Marshall released the Generalissimo. So, for an explanation, take your pick -- a wife's devotion, or a couple of hundred thousand bayonets.

Anyway, the last word tonight is that the incredible Chinese episode has come to a still more incredible conclusion. Released prisoner Chiang-Kai-Shek, his wife and rebellious Marshal Chang who seized him -- all three on their way to Nanking. The

news is that the Generalissimo has guaranteed his kidnapers safety in some way. And that's likely. Also rumors and contradictions about ransom.

EUROPE

Today was uneventful in the perilous European situation. The supposition that Hitler might choose Christmas to start something turned out to be unfounded. No word from Hitler in his Bavarian retreat. All quiet, but just as nervous as ever!

With France and Great Britain determined to keep Hitler from intervening powerfully in Spain, we hear that London has wooed and won -- Rome. There's plenty of authoritative dope today to tell us that Mussolini has stepped to the side of his old antagonist, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden. It is explained that the Duce has no desire to see Hitler kick the international fat into the fire. Rome doesn't want any trouble. Rome also doesn't want to see Germany get a powerful position in Spain and the Mediterranean.

The word is that Ambassador Dino Grandi in London informed Foreign Secretary Eden that if there's trouble with Germany -- it will not disturb the agreement which Italy has been negotiating with Great Britain. That all-around understanding in which London and Rome are washing up the last remains of the Ethiopian

dispute -- forgive and forget.

On the other hand there's a bit of inside dope which says that London is worried by the thought that if Mussolini should decide to play a strong Fascist hand in Spain -- nothing could be done about it. If the Duce should join in with the Hitler-Spanish policy -- it would be too uncomfortable to contemplate.

So the Christmas news finds the Roman dictator occupying a central position, with a balance of power, his favor courted by London and Paris on one hand, and by Berlin on the other. That's what's known as a strategic advantage.

The Spanish news tonight sounds familiar. At least, one word of it does -- bombardment. But this time it's not only the bombardment of Madrid,--a terrific artillery blast -- but also a bombing of Burgos -- the rebel headquarters. And there's another novelty -- the nationality of the air raiders - Americans. The Left Wing government retaliating for a Christmas Eve sky bombing of Madrid, sent a squadron of war planes to strike at Franco's home town of Burgos. And prominent among the attacking aviators was: - the Yankee squadron. That's what they call the

group of American fliers serving on the Madrid side. And who was leading that raid? Why none other than our old friend -- Bert Acosta. Yes, that gay, and dashing and irrepressible Bert who was chief pilot on the Byrd flight across the Atlantic and who is a veteran of as much dare-devil flying as any other man in the world. Bert Acosta in Spain doesn't sound astonishing. He's of an old Spanish family of California. I don't know just why Bert is flying for the Left wingers. I've never heard him discuss his political opinions -- never observed them to be Socialist or Communist, or anarcho-syndicalist -- or anything red. But all you'd have to say to Bert would be -- there's flying to be done, there's money on the line, and you'd see that familiar sight of aviation -- Bert Acosta at anybody's controls. And which ever way that war goes, I hope they don't shoot Bert down.

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This Christmas in England the subject of royalty is of especial interest. The royal romance having resulted in a constitutional crisis, the succession to the crown came much to the foreground. So it's timely for Britain to receive a Christmas present in the form of ^{another} possible royal heir, sixth in line to the throne. A daughter -- to the Duke of Kent and his Duchess, the former Princess Marina of Greece. It's the ^{or} second child, their eldest being a little boy, Prince Edward.

In attendance at Kent House was Sir John Simon, Home Secretary. His presence was because of an old law that a minister of the crown shall be on duty to prevent the intrusion of a possible foundling. So Sir John Simon was there, just as one of the ministers -- and not as Home Secretary, although that would have been appropriate.

KING

The Duke of Windsor celebrated Christmas today -- now how do you think? hold everything! By officiating in the pulpit! The pulpit is a favorite place for the archbishops of Canterbury and York, the vantage point from which they preach some of their fine flowers of morality about the conduct of kings. Maybe his ex-Majesty was showing his arch-episcopal critics that he too knows what a pulpit is for, having just ceased to be head of the Church of England.

The former monarch made his church appearance in the stately city of Vienna. The Rothchild castle, where his is living, is not far away. So the Duke drove to the English church in Vienna. He didn't preach a sermon, didn't attempt any lofty heights of ecclesiastical eloquence. He merely read the day's lesson from the Scripture. The news dispatch relates that he was ill at ease at first and fiddled nervously with his necktie, which is as he has been doing for the last twenty-five years. Then he recovered his equanimity and read the Christmas text. I can't quote it, but assuredly it was appropriate for Christmas. Maybe the exiled Monarch read the Scriptural passage about how -- there was no room for them at the inn.

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Edward's attendance at church today seems to dispute the conjecture that he might quit the church of England because of the attacks by the Arch-bishops.

POPE

There were alarming rumors about the condition of Pope Pius -- after the exertion of his radio broadcast yesterday. A disturbed night -- heart stimulants administered. But today came a reassuring announcement from the Vatican. The Pontiff seemed better, ~~today,~~ and spent a happy Christmas. His physicians ^{are} still anxious, but at any rate they have no bad news to give.

BRISBANE

In any broadcast of the news an expression frequently used is the word -- today. Now once more that word must be spoken, but in a different sense. Today -- with another meaning.

This morning I picked up the New York American, and glanced at that familiar headline on the column called -- TODAY. So familiar in nearly all the Hearst newspapers, -- and elsewhere, -- Arthur Brisbane's column.

I read the first paragraph, a Christmas sentiment characteristic of Brisbane the optimist: - "Another Christmas has come", it reads, "a birthday that means kindness and hope for many millions of human beings."

Yes, hope for millions -- but this Christmas meant more than mere human earthly hope for Arthur Brisbane. A few hours later came the flash -- "Brisbane had died". And Today came to an end today -- at any rate so far as its creator is concerned. The almost legendary figure of American journalism expired in his New York apartment, in a lofty sky--scraper far above Manhattan Island whose glories he had so oft extolled.

In another paragraph of Brisbane's Christmas column, his last column, I read -- "Happy is he who today can bring smiles to the faces of children and to the faces of care-worn mothers."

^{And}~~But~~ this Christmas Arthur Brisbane brings, not smiles -- but sadness. An irony, perhaps.

He lived a great ~~like~~ life. His father was a famous figure of his time, one of the earliest pioneers of Socialism in the United States. His son inherited a concern for human welfare. He came to prominence in the fabulous newspaper days of Joseph Pulitzer, when editors battled mightily for causes. He was one of Pulitzer's brilliant young stalwarts. Then William Randolph Hearst made his own slashing entrance into American journalism. Opposing Pulitzer he took from his rival a whole staff of able men headed by Arthur Brisbane. As editor of the New York Evening Journal Brisbane rose to great fortune. His salary was reputed to be a quarter of a million a year, on top of which he made a fortune in real estate investments. Becoming the author of the immensely successful column TODAY, he ranked as the Dean and most successful of American journalists.

I recall him well, saw him often at public affairs --

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~~the~~-national conventions and such. He ~~was~~ always sat in the press section, in among the other newspapermen, his typewriter in

front of him, and he pecked away as industriously as the most hard-working of the young reporters. It seemed to be a point of pride with him, at the height of career and success to play the part of simply the reporter, the working newspaperman.

Now, for Arthur Brisbane -- this earthly today has become that other tomorrow.

FISH

Suppose that for years your great ambition was to catch a sailfish, and suppose you landed one on Christmas? That would seem like a merry Christmas all right -- although it might not be so entirely merry, as C. R. Gutermuth of the Indiana Game Commission can tell you.

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With his wife and another man he was fishing off the coast of Florida and ^{got} ~~caught~~ a magnificent strike -- a sailfish, one of the fightingest of its kind. After a long ^{battle} ~~fight~~ he landed ^{the pugnacious piscatorian} ~~the battler~~. Just at that moment of triumph a sudden storm hit. A huge wave swept over the boat, and all three of the fishing party were swept into the sea. The boat drifted away ~~ee~~ before the wind, and ^{there} they were left struggling in the storm-swept ocean. It didn't seem like such a merry Christmas just then -- as they fought to ~~keep~~ ^{Then in the nick of time} keep afloat. ~~Then~~, a boat came along and picked them up. At last reports they were trying to locate their drifting fishing craft, in it the sailfish the ambition of years.

CIRCUS

A few days ago the news carried an apt item of romance -- not the courtship, but the marriage of Miles Standish. The old time Miles had a friend to do his courting, and the result was that Miles never married Priscilla. She saying to the friend -- "Why don't you speak for yourself John". The present day descendant of that bashful soldier of old did his own courting, spoke for himself, not only for the girl, but also to the State Department in Washington. Diplomatic Representative Miles Standish is an American consular official in Europe. Having spoken to the girl and heard her murmur "Yes" -- he was up against the fact that she was a foreign citizen. Remembering that recent State Department ruling? The one forbidding an American diplomat to marry a foreign woman without express permission from Washington? Well, there was the modern and anything but bashful Miles in love with a girl and up against a stone wall. What did he do? Send for some John Alden? No! He wrote to the State Department, told them about his engagement, and handed in his abdication -- royal for resignation. He said the diplomatic burden is too great without the woman I love. Washington responded by sending back the resignation and giving permission.

That Miles Standish story sounded exceedingly pat and pointed. But how about his one -- today's romance? From Oklahoma we hear of the wedding of Barnum and Bailey. Earl Barnum and Inez Bailey. And that's no mere accident of names. Bridegroom and bride are of the families of those two renowned circus kings who established Barnum and Bailey's. The greatest show on earth. Earl Barnum is a grandson of a nephew of Phineas T. Barnum. Inez Bailey is a grand-daughter of a nephew of James A. Bailey.

Appropriately enough the couple first met in the box-office-wagon of the circus. In the course of time Mr. Barnum said to Miss Bailey, "Will you be mine". And tonight we can reflect that the wedding of Barnum and Bailey is as appropriate as Santa Claus on Christmas. And now I think I'll Ringling off, and

SO LONG UNTIL MONDAY