

MUSSOLINI

Loyal Italians in many American cities are drinking an extra beaker of vino rosso today with maybe an additional strega or two. For this is the birthday of Il Duce, Benito Mussolini. The man of many frowns - is fifty-three years old.

The celebration of his anniversary will be strictly confined to Fascisti outside of Italy, No birthday candles are being lit in the Chigi Palace. For, Italy's Premier not only abstained from celebrating today, but all his loyal subjects were likewise forbidden to take any notice of the occasion. In fact, it is verboten to mention his anniversary in any Italian newspaper. He does not acknowledge birthdays any more. Is it vanity? On the contrary, it's political strategy. The keynote of Fascismo is Giovinezza - youth. A dictator must be young, or at any rate believed to be young. So the Black Shirt leader guards the secret of his age as jealously as a screen star.

How does he carry his fifty-three years? This one, 1935-6 has been tough politically, and personally. Politically,

the war in Africa, his diplomatic war in Europe, his fight against sanctions, and his present fight for recognition of his Ethiopian conquest -- a continual fight. In the privacy of his home he has had to worry over the severe illness of his little seven year old daughter, Anna Maria.

But the war is won; sanctions are dead; and Little Anna Maria has completely recovered. So there's cheer in the heart of Papa Mussolini on his 53rd birthday.

Consequently, they say, he's relaxing. The celebrated scowl you see so often in the newsreels is being replaced by a smile. He is taking time off from his huge study in the "Keegee" Palace, to have a little time with his family.

And he passes hours flying, fencing, riding, and driving his speedy automobile over Italy's highways where they say he slows down to eighty miles an hour on the curves.

Physically, Italy's fifty-three year old ruler is in the pink. Sleeps well, apparently has as much energy as in the days when a hundred thousand Black Shirts marched on Rome.

He isn't celebrating. But, he received a birthday

present in the shape of good news from Addis Ababa. An army of two thousand Ethiopians had swooped down on the imperial highway ~~xx~~ that runs from the north of Addis to Dessye. It was under the command of Averra Kassa, son of the ^{ex-}Emperor's War Minister. But a force of Italian soldiers on reconnoissance caught them in the act, joined in battle, and drove them off leaving eleven hundred Ethiopians dead on the field. The ink wasn't dry on that dispatch before news came of another engagement. This time south of Addis. The official report describes the aggressors as brigands. Whatever they were, they ^{too} were repulsed with heavy losses.

For the rest, Mussolini passed his birthday preparing for the new Locarno conference, the impending discussion between John Bull, France, Belgium, Germany and Italy. On this point Mussolini also had his way, prevailing upon Great Britain, France and Belgium to invite ^{Germany} ~~the Fatherland~~, which they hadn't originally intended to do. ~~All this is interpreted as meaning that London and Paris, reluctant though they may be, will eventually recognize Ethiopia as Italian territory. When that's done, the next~~

SPAIN

In Spain tonight the Red Government seems to be slightly on top. However, the appointment of a new commander-in-chief for the Loyal troops is significant. It gives us at least a hint of how critical the situation is. Another ominous circumstance is that the outgoing generalissimo held his job only a few days.

The new leader, who replaces General Jose Riqualme, is General Bemal. He was so appointed after General Costello, the Minister of War paid a visit to the front at Guadarrama. General Riqualme is not bounced out slides into the office of Director of ~~Spain~~ Public Security.

We can visualize the rest of the Spanish scene as a number of Rebel strongholds beleaguered by bombarding government armies. Nevertheless, if the Loyal forces were as triumphant as the government communications claim, it would hardly have been necessary to appoint that new commander-in-chief. Reports tell of rebel planes shot down and a government submarine sunk by sky attack.

There is confirmation of the report that American property has been confiscated in Barcelona. In taking over all the factories in that great industrial city, the red government forces seized funds belonging to General Motors, also to the Ford Corporation, deposited in three Barcelona banks. The government's officers have also confiscated all the finished passenger cars at the plants. And, the American companies involved are complaining to the State Department in Washington about it.

The dispatches also verified the report that an American woman has been ~~wounded~~ wounded; a Mrs. Fernando Gallardo, daughter of a newspaper publisher of Tampa, Florida. She became a casualty during the fighting in the Guadarrama Mountains. We don't know yet how serious her injuries are, but she was moved to the American Embassy in Madrid. The Americans did not get away from Madrid today as had been expected. And the city of Oviedo is now mentioned as a new danger spot for marooned Americans.

STORM

Life in the Caribbean this week seems to be just one darn storm after another. Uncle Sam's hurricane service is working overtime issuing ~~xx~~ warnings to Floridians to board up their windows, fasten down anything that's loose, and glue on their whiskers. So far all the warnings have been unnecessary. The storm that was on its way yesterday blew itself out pretty much at sea and did no damage. It struck Everglade City but found the residents all prepared, boarded up, and ready for anything. And- only a fringe of the big wind lashed at Miami.

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There's still concern over a group of fishermen on the Coral Islets just south of the mainland. These bits of land are barely above high water level. So it is feared the hurricane may have been strong enough to sweep them off with the roaring waves.

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Now - there's another potential hurricane on its way to the West coast. The government sent out warnings to all ships and to all people living within reach of high tide. The latest report had the revolving storm moving northwest.

MILLAR

The dead hand of a humorous millionaire is stirring up an amusing hubbub in the fair and hustling City of Toronto. In fact, all Canada and quite a number of people in these United States have been observing with amusement the race to produce babies which that millionaire's quaint Last Will and Testament ~~is~~ precipitated. The race is ^{now} in its last lap ^{— lap is right —} and there are strong chances that it may finish in the lower courts of Toronto or possibly even in the high court at Ottawa.

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The late Charles Vance Millar, in his working hours was a famous and highly successful lawyer. But he wasn't working at that. He was busily engaged ⁱⁿ being Canada's most eminent ^{practical} joker. He was fond of sport, fond of a laugh. ~~As a matter of fact,~~ It is believed that he made a considerable portion of his millions at the racetrack ^{— which usually is nothing to laugh about.} But that's probably one of the apocryphal legends that grow up around ^a ~~many~~ rich sportsmen. ~~I~~ My own racing friends tell me that nobody ever made a fortune betting on the ponies - not in all the Lord knows how many thousand years that men have raced horses against each other for sport and a bit of worldly goods on the side.

However he made his millions, Millar had them. Outside of racing, one of his favorite amusement was drawing up Wills. One day he would leave thousands of dollars to some friend or maybe somebody who was not a friend. He would then send a carbon copy of that Will to the beneficiary. The next day he would draw up another one, leaving large ^{amounts} ~~warrants~~ to somebody else. But one day he joked once too often. He drew up a Testament with three jocose clauses. One of them left all his brewery and distilling stock to a prominent Canadian prohibitionist. There was a string tied to this gift. The condition was that the prohibitionist gentleman must not give away or otherwise dispose of those sinful shares. What was the poor blue-ribboner to do? On one side ^{was} ~~his~~ his job and his famous principles. On the other side a handsome income of many thousand dollars a year. What did he do? He threw up his ~~job~~ prohibitionist job and took the millions.

Another victim of that same Will was a prominent churchman who had spent years of his life trying to put down gambling. To him Charlie Millar left ~~h~~ all his shares in the Ontario Jo^ckey Club. The ~~Rev~~ reverend gentleman resigned from

his pulpit and took the stock. It was not until he had given up his occupation that he discovered what Charlie Millar had done to him. ~~For~~ For those shares in the Jokey Club, ~~they~~ though worth a lot of money, paid no dividends. So the Reverend was minus both job and income.

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The third joke in that Will concerned race suicide. With this Charlie Millar, himself, a determined bachelor, left half a million dollars to the Toronto woman who bore the largest number of children in the ten years following his death. This Will, as I've mentioned, he intended as a joke, intending to revoke it eventually and make another one. . But before he could cancel it, he up and died, died on October Thirty-First, Nineteen Twenty-six, Ever since then the race has been on. And at this present moment several ^{prolific} ~~several~~ Toronto ladies are vieing with each other to ^{be} ~~get~~ first under the wire.

Incidentally, when one ~~thinks~~ of large Canadian families, one necessarily thinks of the Dionnes. ^{(But} (The Dionnes ~~of course~~ do not live in Toronto.).

The principal candidates are a lady who says she has sixteen children. She's a little woman, not much bigger than

a midget. She declares twelve of the sixteen were born since the death of Charles Vance Millar. But there's a fly in that little lady's ointment, as she omitted the little formality of obtaining birth certificates for three of those children who were still-born. Her closest competitor has a family of seventeen. Of those, eleven were born since October, Nineteen Twenty-six. But some of those she, also, failed to register at the bureau of vital statistics. That leaves it up to a third candidate, who has ten, all of them born in the required time, all of them registered. But a dark horse entry is coming down the home stretch! ~~That's~~ a woman who had nine ~~babies~~ babies in ten years, and at the present moment is hopeful and prayerfully awaiting the arrival of twins. ^π So, there's excitement on the northwestern shore of Lake Ontario. ^π Some irreverent ⁺ souls are sinfully betting on the outcome of this unique marathon.

LIFE GUARDS

I've a bit of sad news for young ladies who like to go down to the seashore, whether for swimming or other purposes. If they don't leave the life guards alone they're going to be punished.

So far this cruel prohibition applies only to Ocean City, New Jersey. But the condition it is intended to stop prevails pretty much everywhere. In Ocean City, as at other beaches, the tall, bronzed forms of the young life-savers gather sweet young things around them like flies around a honey pot. All of which brings grey-hairs to the whiskers of the chiefs of the beach patrol. The life savers haven't got their minds on life saving. The chiefs have tried punishing the life guards, suspending them from duty without pay. But that demoralizes the force. So now the authorities of the Jersey resort are going to take it out on the gals. They'll be sent to ~~ka~~ jail if they don't let the life guards alone. The girls will have to confine their attentions to the narrow-shouldered, sunken-chested clerks on vacation.

SPORTS

When the pious pontiffs of the Olympic Committee dropped the beautiful Eleanor, they explained they were doing it for the good of the team. They said if they had overlooked the bacchic adventure of that young Venus of the waters, they would have endangered the discipline, the morale, of the other athletes under their paternal supervision.

But somehow their stern paternal policy seems to have missed fire. We learn today that some of the remaining members of the team were far from intimidated by the rigors meted out to the swimming aphrodite. A couple of boxers appear to have sought sweet dalliance with the gay life of Berlin. Maybe just wanted to see what it was like to train on that gaseous brew called Weissbier. Two seidels of that are enough to make any normal person feel that he is swallowing the HINDENBURG. But, the Berliners like it and if you can stand it, it's not bad, with little hot sausages.

Whatever their tipple, those two boxers have now felt the ~~xx~~ axe on their heads, the sharp, cruel executioner's axe swung by Mr. Avery Brundage who took umbrage. The

pugilists were put on a train and thence conducted to the liner MANHATTAN, on which they are now sailing for home -- seeing Eleanor Holm. Their substitutes, it is explained, will box in their place. If this keeps up, Uncle Sam will enter the arena represented entirely by a team of subs. Not suds -- subs.

TIGERS

There's a gnashing of teeth among the Detroit Tigers today. Not because the team is at the bottom of the first division either -- which it is. It was over an even more hard and pragmatic matter. It's a tale that I hardly know how to tell tears in my voice.

It started with an invitation. Mickey Cochrane's boys were asked to be guests at a banquet, a banquet of the Automobile Dealers' Association. Now personally, I can't find it in my heart to blame Mickey's athletes for dodging any banquet. I dodge them all the time. Of all the dreary pleasures in life banquets are tops, - generally. And on that most of the Detroit ball players evidently agree. They stayed away from the function in large numbers. Only six attended.

However, those that went had a surprise. Each of those six found at his plate a handsomely embossed ~~xxx~~ envelope. When opened each found inside a piece of paper which entitled him to a brand-new, spanking, with-all-the-modern-gadgets automobile!

Can you imagine the glee of those six when they

reached Navin Field for practise this morning waving those automobile certificates? The lucky fellows were Schoolboy Rowe, Goose Goslin, Marvin Owen, Gerald Walker, Jack Burns, and Salty Parker. And can you imagine the feelings, the chagrin, the mortification of those who did not attend, and consequently DID NOT receive the gift of a brand-new-spanking modern 1937 automobile.

And among those who didn't attend was Hank Greenburg pride of the Bronx. Oi Yoi -- and,

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.