

TORRIO

27 - Sunoco. Churo. March 9, 1939

New York is soon to have a criminal trial that will be featured by star performances of what the underworld calls -- squealing. The Hines case, which resulted in the conviction of a famous Tammany leader, was quite a concerto of state's evidence given by former henchmen of the Dutch Schultz policy racket -- Dixie Davis in particular. But New York's next court sensation will be a still louder example of witnesses telling all. It will be the trial of Johnny Torrio for income tax violation -- ~~that~~ ^{the same} Johnny Torrio who was once a teacher and partner of Scarface Al Capone in running Chicago's bootleg underworld of prohibition days. Torrio was badly shot up in the gang wars, and vanished -- leaving Scarface Al in sole lordship. Nothing was heard from him for years, but recently he has attracted the attention of the law, and now comes ^{to} ~~the~~ trial charged with ~~income~~ tax frauds.

It is announced that one of the witnesses ^{to} ~~who will~~ testify against him will be -- Dixie Davis, the same one-time Dutch Schultz lawyer who was the star witness against Tammany leader James J. Hines. So we will have Dixie Davis in ^a ~~the second~~ ^{return performance} ~~prima donna~~ ^{role} as state's witness.

To make it a duet of stars, testimony against Torrio will

also be given by his old pal and colleague -- Capone. No, Scarface Al won't depart from Alcatraz and come to New York to take the witness stand. His evidence against Torrio will be read, it has already been given. At Alcatraz he dictated it -- a fifty page deposition.

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It reminds us of the gangland story of how young Johnny Torrio of New York was brought to Chicago as a bodyguard and how he became a gang boss there, and in turn he brought another promising young man from New York to Chicago, as his assistant --

~~Scarface Al Capone.~~ We don't know what happened between ^{teacher and pupil} ~~these two~~

in the feuds and murders of the ~~pre~~ prohibition era, for today Capone with fifty pages of evidence is helping the government to prosecute Torrio -- and ~~he~~ says he is glad to do it.

COUNTERFEITING

There's a big Chicago counterfeit case, and today we get some Sherlock Holmes crime drama - the mystery of the jars of preserves and the four trees.

The story goes back to the nobleman called Count Victor Lustig, "Count" meaning "counterfeit." This spurious nobleman was convicted of making spurious money and sent to prison for twenty years. The federal authorities got word that eighty thousand dollars of the Count's counterfeit was being circulated by two other men. They intercepted a couple of letters, ~~with one of the two men in Chicago writing to the other in most mysterious fashion.~~ One ~~letter~~ contained ^{ing} this phrase: "Water got into the jars and ruined the preserves." Another said: "The spring thaw has come. It is time to replant those trees at the fifteenth hole. The fourth tree should be moved six and a half feet." With this cryptic missive was a sketch map of a golf course green with four trees in the background. So there ~~was~~ were the clues, preserve jars, fifteenth hole, fourth tree, six and a half feet.

The government sleuths found that the two cryptic correspondents frequently played golf on a certain Chicago course,

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~~With one letter referring to the fifteenth hole, they found that~~

~~the two~~ ^{and} often made bets on the fifteenth hole. A trip to the

golf course showed that the fifteenth hole was accurately depicted

by the ^{sketch map with the four trees,} ~~trees~~ They went to the fourth tree and paced off six and

^{Lo and behold} a half feet, and started to dig. They unearth three fruit jars

crammed with eight hundred and ninety-four \$20-bills, counterfeit,

nearly eighteen thousand dollars worth.

^{and} That's how the government Sherlock Holmes solved the
mystery of the preserve jars and the four trees.

GARDNER

A famous train robber and prison breaker of times gone by is under indictment at Portland, Oregon. Too bad, because it's a painful incident in the romantic story of a notorious convict going straight.

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Years ago, Roy Gardner robbed trains in the old wild west fashion and crashed his way out of jail in hair-raising escapes. He was captured and recaptured, until finally they got him behind unbreakable bars and he stayed there. One time when Train Robber Roy Gardner was captured, it was because of the quick work of police officer Louis Sonney at Centralia, Washington - and the policeman got the reward offered for the apprehension of the bandit. With this money, Louis Sonney set himself up in the film business, and did well. He never forgot the convict to whose arrest he owed the beginning of his prosperity. Roy Gardner was in prison for seventeen years, and every month Louis Sonney sent him five dollars. Seven months ago he was released, and when he stepped out of prison, there waiting for him was the one-time policeman who had captured him those years ago. Sonney gave Gardner a job at fifty dollars a

week in his film business - to rehabilitate. But apparently that didn't work out so well.

"Gardner said the fifty dollars a week I gave him was trivial," the film man declared today. "He said he should get fifty dollars a day; and ^{he} quit."

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Next, Gardner made an agreement for the writing of his life as a bandit - in collaboration with a newspaper woman. They had a squabble about money, and the one-time train robber wrote her a letter. He says it was just sarcastic. But authorities say it was so unprintable that now he's indicted on a charge connected with the United States mails - held on bail of two thousand dollars.

Nevertheless, the famous bad man of times gone by announces today that he is going right ahead with some lectures he's planning to give at the Golden Gate Exposition, lectures on the theme - crime doesn't pay. He might add; - sometimes letter writing doesn't pay either.

GIANTS

There was a battle of giants in St. Joseph, Missouri, today - though only a court battle. Robert P. Wadlow, ^{the} a circus giant called the tallest man in the world, ~~is~~ suing a doctor, who wrote an article ~~in a medical magazine and said that~~ ^{saying} Wadlow was not normal.

Today, two witnesses for the doctor's defense were two other circus giants, Jack Earle and Glenn Rider. ^{As for} Wadlow ^{he} simply looked down on them. One is only ^{somewhat} ~~a little~~ more than eight feet tall, the other a mere seven feet tall - just a shorty. Wadlow is eight feet eight. The two giants are testifying that they read the article the doctor wrote, and ~~don't see any~~ ^{saw no} harm in it.

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In addition to all this gigantic testimony today, there was rather a Lilliputian bit of evidence. A Chicago hotel doorman, of pitiful ordinary stature, testified for the defense, and told of trying to take a picture of Wadlow in his full majesty of eight feet eight. The giant, he says, demanded fifty cents for the right to photograph him. The hotel doorman refused to pay the fifty cents, but snapped a picture anyway. "He called me over to him," testified the doorman today. "When I walked up ~~to~~ he hit me with his fist. He knocked me ten feet."

Just Gulliver among the Lilliputians!

FIGHT

~~I think that at this moment I should call upon all of us men to bow our heads in sadness and sympathy for a sorrowing brother, a fellow man who is in difficulties because of these dangerous~~

~~and often deadly people, called women.~~ *At Los Angeles,* Cliff Henderson is a sports promoter - accustomed to the society of wrestlers, prize-fighters and similar ~~mild and~~ inoffensive persons, but unfortunately now and then one does get into the society of women. ~~And that's when the~~

~~trouble usually begins.~~ *And* Poor Cliff is accused of hauling off and socking a lady. Poor Cliff!

~~At Hollywood today, the melancholy sports promoter explained to the city attorney no, he did not take a punch at Vivian Coe, the beautiful ~~chorus~~ girl.~~

~~"I never struck a woman in my life," asseverates Cliff.~~

Today In explanation he tells a story of two beautiful ~~chorus~~ *mes* chorus girls who are deadly rivals. Dazzling Vivian Coe and ravishing Louise Burnett have frequently competed against each other in beauty contests, ~~each matching her~~ charms and fascinations, against the other. So you can understand the pathos of Cliff's narration, as he tells it in these words:

"I was standing on the sidewalk," says he, "talking to Louise ~~Burnett~~ of whom ^{Miss Vivian Col} ~~Miss Coe~~ is professionally jealous.

Just then ^{Vivian} ~~Miss Coe~~ and another chorus girl walked by. She turned and said something about wanting to give Miss Burnett a piece of her mind." ~~That seems to have been the point where Cliff should have cleared out as fast as possible, because~~ ^{no} man should stick around when ^{women,} ~~two men,~~ especially two beauty contest rivals, are giving each other pieces of their mind - if any. But Cliff stayed there, and here's what he says happened.

"She hauled off and took a swipe at my chin," ~~he is~~ ~~grieved to say~~ "I put up my hand to defend myself - I did not strike her ." And then he adds ~~the~~ that plaintive protestation - "I never struck a woman in my life."

~~Peer Cliff, I certainly do think that the rest of us men ought to shed a sorrowful tear for him.~~

SPAIN

(Another day of fighting between the ^{Madrid} ~~Republican~~ moderates in Spain and the Communists. Time after time the Madrid radio has announced that the Communist revolt had been suppressed, ~~with this~~. ^{Then} ~~followed by~~ new reports ~~telling~~ of more battle.) Today's news described violent clashes in Madrid, and in other places in the Republican area. In the afternoon, a dispatch came through declaring once more that the Communist outbreak had finally been put down. The latest word this evening is that fighting is still going on.

(The Franco armies have been sitting quiet, while their enemies are tearing each other to pieces in a civil war within a civil war.)
The insurgents seem to have been observing some sort of truce, but dispatches today tell ^{how} ~~they've~~ pushed forward a bit. No, not fighting - no battle. We're told that Franco's men simply walked over and took possession of positions abandoned by the Republicans in their fighting among themselves. ^{Madrid} ~~Republican~~ troops withdrawn from trench lines to fight the Communists, and the Franco people taking over those trench lines.

Burgos orders its Navy to sink any vessel entering the three mile limit of the Republican coast. This has produced repercussions in London - for the British are always touchy about sea rights. Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax told the House of Peers today that if the Franco Navy sinks any British ships, His Majesty's government will regard it as a most serious matter. The Foreign Secretary indicated that Great Britain will not tolerate or recognize the Franco blockade.

BRAZIL

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American millions are being thrown into the South American battlefield of trade, stacks of United States cash to counteract the commercial drive ^{of} the totalitarian powers, Germany and Italy, ~~are staging on the great continent to the south.~~ Today, Washington announces a big deal with Brazil, a hundred and twenty million dollar deal according to report. Washington is advancing that much to Rio to promote American trade in the land of the Amazon.

The arrangement is something like this. Brazil agrees to eliminate artificial money and trade barriers, declaring freedom of commerce, a wide open market for American goods. Moreover, Brazil will pay its American debts. In return, the United States government will advance credits with which Brazil can buy American merchandise, financial aid to the tune of a hundred and twenty million dollars - it is said.

Thus the government paves the financial way for American business to compete with German and Italian trade policies in Brazil.

SPEND

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Cut expenses! -- that word ~~comes~~ from the White House now. President Roosevelt today had a conference of officials, one of them Senator Pat Harrison of Mississippi, ~~he's a~~ strong advocate of government economy. ^{Pat} ~~He~~ talked about cutting down the ~~sp~~ spending, and says that the meeting with the President was "completely harmonious". ^{F. D. R.} ~~President Roosevelt~~ told the conference that expenses should be cut ~~if~~ whenever possible.

STRIKE

In Washington the strike picket lines have caused the cancellation of a great annual function - the banquet of the White House Correspondents. Every year that's one of the hilarious events of the season, with the President in attendance and a veritable "Who's Who" of politics and journalism enjoying the show. But it won't be staged this ~~year~~ ^{Saturday--} - no scintillating bill of radio headliners, no parady newsreel got up by my colleague, Lew Lehr of ~~For~~ Movietone. All because of the hotel strike, with picket lines drawn around the hostelryes of the national capital.

Today, officers of the White House Correspondents Association had a conference with hotel managers and labor leaders and were told the strike wasn't likely to be settled by ~~Saturday~~ ^{the weekend.} ~~the date of the banquet.~~ Whereupon the correspondents announced a cancellation - because of the problem of the President and the picket line; they didn't want to cause a situation whereby ~~the~~ ^{of the United States} President ~~Roosevelt~~ ^{Roosevelt} would have to choose whether or not to pass through the cordon of strikers around a hotel.

All this provoked some lively debate in Congress today.

Republican Representative Clark Hoffman of Michigan made ironic

remarks about the President and the picket line. Republican Representative Knutson of Minnesota chimed in. ~~He thought the~~ correspondents' banquet was to have been held at the Willard, and he remarked that the Willard has two stately entrances - both picketed. The Mayflower, on the other hand, has many entrances, including one through the drug store. So the Congressman asked why ~~didn't they transfer the banquet to the Mayflower?~~ The guests, the Congressman pointed out, could go in the ^{hotel} drug store, and spend a few minutes there, as if having a coco cola or a soda. Then, when the pickets outside were not looking, they could sneak into the hotel. A great idea, Congressman, but it would hardly do for the President of the United States!

There was a good deal of Republican comment about various New Deal executives being embarrassed by the picket line, sneaking into their hotels, trying to slip by when the pickets were not looking. Well, there would seem to be a dilemma when a passionate political partisan of labor ~~XXXX~~ lives in a hotel that has a strike - it's tough to have to move out all of a sudden, and it's embarrassing to stay in.

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SKUNK

It would take a bunch of professors to get up an idea like this - a solution of the pole cat problem at Teaneck, New Jersey. In the basement of the Bergen County Junior College, there lurks the kind of kitty affectionately known as the skunk. It's tucked away in an obscure out of the way corner, and nobody ~~knows how~~ ^{dares} to go near him. They've been trying to devise ways of getting the pole cat to depart, ~~when~~ ^{up} stepped some professors. And they ~~would have~~ ^{with} a brilliant idea! "Let's try ~~carbon bisulphide~~ ^{hydrogen}," they announced, and ~~thought it was~~ ^{an} inspiration.

Now every chemtry student knows that ~~carbon bisulphide~~ ^{sulphureted hydrogen} is a particularly malodorous gas, often called - rotten egg gas, named after what it smells like. And the professorial theory was - to get rid of the pole cat by stinking it out. Imagine a good old fashioned American skunk with his ripe and rare aroma being embarrassed by the mere smell of over-ripe eggs! ~~Next time~~ He'd laugh at their ~~carbon bisulphide~~ ^{hydrogen sulphide}, he'd think it a rare perfume, attar of roses ^{to him}

^{today} ~~Two of~~ the professors tried it out. They flooded the basement ~~where kitty is supposed to be, with carbon bisulphide,~~ ^{with sulphureted hydrogen} and

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the only result is that today the school is perfumed in two ^{ways:-} ~~ways~~

~~of perfume~~ - rotten eggs plus skunk. ~~and they~~

^{it was once proposed that}
And ~~they're going to have~~ professors run our

government!

9/4

LT at
Eastern
Slope Inn,
North
Conway, N.H.
Mar. 10, 1939.