

AIRPLANE

Lowell Thomas' Broadcast
for The Literary Digest.
Thursday, June 25, 1931

1
2
3 Good Evening, Everybody!

4 Over in Europe two men were sailing
5 along in an airplane. And they were
6 saying to each other--there isn't much
7 gas left. Yes, we'll have to land right
8 there--in Spain.

9 They spied a flying field and landed.
10 "So this is Spain," they said. People
11 came running up. But the funny part was
12 those people didn't talk Spanish. They
13 talked German.

14 Yes, sir, two trans-Atlantic fliers
15 lost their way and thought they were
16 landing in Spain. As a matter of fact,
17 they had come to earth in Germany.

18 Who are they? Why, they are the
19 two Danish fliers, ^{the H-H boys,} Hillig and Horiis--
20 the chaps who took off from Newfoundland
21 yesterday at dawn to fly to Copenhagen.
22 Not a word was heard from them for more
23 than 30 hours. They had no wireless
24 aboard. And it seemed likely that two
25 more men had gone west into the blue
instead of east to Denmark.

Well, they took 32 hours and 6
minutes to get from Newfoundland to the

town of Krefeld in Germany, in the Rhineland. And that's nearly twice as long as it took the other two trans-Atlantic fliers who whizzed across the ocean the day before. The two Danes had a much slower plane.

And then they were lost. They missed their bearings, and hadn't the slightest idea where they were -- or, rather, they did have an idea, only it was wrong. They believed that what they saw below them were the romantic castles of Spain, when they were in reality the beer gardens of Germany.

They stopped just long enough in that German town of Krefeld to take more gas aboard. And then off they sped toward Denmark.

The International News Service tells us that these two Danish fliers have a neat line for their trans-Atlantic jaunt. They say they're just a couple of immigrants returning home.

Tonight the flying immigrants are sleeping in Bremen, Germany. From Krefeld they headed for Copenhagen but when they saw the North Sea they decided they'd seen ~~XXXX~~ enough water for

one day. So they swung back to Bremen and tomorrow they'll hop the remaining couple hundred miles to Copenhagen.

Meanwhile, the other two trans-Atlantic fliers, Post and Gatty, landed in Moscow today. Those boys certainly are stepping on the gas --New York, Newfoundland, England, Germany, Moscow, and points east. They're hitting it along toward the rising sun, on what they intend to be a record smashing flight around the world.

1 Well, Secretary of the Treasury
2 Mellon has finally had to cave in. He's
3 had to admit that he's licked.

4 Over in Europe, where he is
5 sojourning, the Secretary of the Treasury
6 has been insisting that his visit was
7 purely unofficial--just a pleasure trip,
8 and in no way connected with business.

9 Today the International News
10 Service quotes Mr. Mellon as saying that
11 his trip is no longer merely a matter
12 of vacation. The turn of events has been
13 such that he just ~~couldn't~~^{can't} help making
14 his European trip a matter of ~~very~~ *exceedingly*
15 important business.

16 Of course that turn of events was
17 President Hoover's plan to put through
18 a year's suspension of payments on
19 reparations and war debts. The French
20 government isn't so enthusiastic about
21 the idea, and Mr. Mellon has been asked
22 to make a quick trip to Paris to talk
23 things over with the French authorities
24 and see if he ~~couldn't~~^{can't} persuade them to
25 take the American view.

1 And so, as the United Press tells
2 us, Secretary of the Treasury Mellon
3 arrived in Paris today.

4 It was a pleasure jaunt, all right,
5 but it certainly has turned into a
6 business trip.

7 Meanwhile, the International News
8 Service passes along a report that the
9 Bank of England, the Bank of France, and
10 the bank that's handling the reparations
11 business, are planning to advance a
12 large sum of money to Germany to tide
13 over the German government in its
14 present hard-up condition.

SPAIN

Over in Spain tonight a few ministers of the government are congratulating themselves. "Yes, "they are saying, "That solves the problem." "We just couldn't let that fellow keep going and there might have been plenty of trouble if we'd locked him up- Si, Senor, we sure got a break."

Yes, they got a break all right, and the fellow who was causing all the trouble also got a break - only his was a different kind. It was a broken leg.

Major Ramon Franco is one of the mighty men of Republican Spain. He is the ace-aviator of the country, and is famous as a trans-Atlantic flier. He is also a radical in politics. He was a leader in an unsuccessful revolt which broke out not long before Alfonso lost his throne. When the Republicans won out, why Franco was a hero. The new Republican government gave him a high place in the Spanish Army - but now they're sorry they did it, because Franco is still a trouble maker. He is denouncing the Government for not being radical enough.

The International News Service tells us he's been making speeches against the government right along, and still worse, he

1 government gave him a high place in the
2 Spanish Army - but now they^{re} ~~are~~ sorry
3 they did it, because Franco is still
4 a troublemaker. He is denouncing the
5 Government for not being radical
6 enough, and ~~has been agitating in~~
7 ~~favor of the Republican Revolutionary~~
8 ~~party which is fighting the present~~
9 ~~government with~~ tooth and nail.

10 The International News Service
11 tells us, ~~that it's against regulations~~
12 ~~for a Spanish army officer to take an~~
13 ~~active part in politics, but regulations~~
14 ~~don't mean much to the famous aviator.~~
15 He's been making speeches against the
16 government right along, and still
17 worse, he has been dropping fiery ~~anti~~
18 ~~government~~ pamphlets from an airplane.

19 Well, the government did^{nt} ~~not~~
20 know just what to do about it. They
21 couldn't let Franco go along disobeying
22 orders like that. He was a positive
23 menace. It was even suspected that
24 he was trying to get up a plot to
25 overthrow the^{new} government. But if they

has been dropping fiery pamphlets from an airplane.

Well, the government didn't know just what to do about it. They couldn't let Franco go along disobeying orders like that. He was a positive menace. It was even suspected that he was trying to get up a plot to overthrow the new government. But if they arrested him it might be still worse, because he has a large following and there might be trouble.

And so the Ministers of the Government were puzzled to find a way to make Franco pipe down during the present political crisis.

Well, the problem was solved for them today. Franco was making another inflammatory political speech. He was right in the middle of a flaming tirade when the platform on which he was speaking collapsed. He went down in a tangle of lumber and when they fished him out they found his leg was broken. He's in the hospital tonight, and the doctors say his political activities will be called off for a month or so. And that's why ministers of the Spanish government are congratulating themselves tonight on the lucky solution of a ticklish political puzzle.

1 We now come to a reply that
2 rather stumped one of ~~the~~ America's
3 foremost literary men. No, it wasn't
4 a clever reply - it was just an honest
5 reply.

6 Theodore Dreiser, the novelist,
7 seems to be going in for the study of
8 economics. He's out making some
9 investigation concerning the mine strike
10 in Pennsylvania, ^{the strike that is discussed in the new Literary Digest.} He's been interviewing
11 the miners and getting information about
12 their troubles and their worries and
13 their drab and dreary lives. ~~He's been~~
14 ~~trying to find out whether there is any~~
15 ~~joy in the lives of the miners, what~~
16 ~~amusement, what entertainment.~~

17 Dreiser was talking to a miner,
18 An Italian. He asked whether the miner
19 and his family had any joy in their lives,
20 any pleasant entertainment.

21 "Sure," replied Tony. "I play
22 the cornet."

23 And so the novelist learned that
24 Tony had plenty of joy and entertainment,
25 playing the cornet, and his family had
their fun listening to him. I don't
suppose that Dreiser had much of any
comeback to that.

DIGEST

Do you remember that old story? The one about the little boy whose mother took him to the opera? Well, the soprano was down at the front of the stage warbling away, and the orchestra conductor was shaking his shaggy hair and waving his baton with violent enthusiasm. The little boy turned to his mother and asked:

"Mamma, why is that man hitting the lady with that stick?"

"Sh, darling," whispered the mother, "he's not hitting the lady."

"Then why is she yelling?" asked the little boy.

In the new Literary Digest, which came out today, there's a sprightly article about orchestra conductors and their temperamental antics. The gist of the article is that some orchestra conductors do a lot of wild and wooly acrobatics and get all "het up" with excitement just as a bit of grandstand play for the benefit of the audience.

So far as the music is concerned, it doesn't mean a thing. And the Digest editors go on to illustrate that theory with a batch of amusing anecdotes.

The Digest editors go to the American Weekly for a funny thing that happened to Sir Thomas Beecham. Sir Thomas is the Beecham of Beecham's Pills, which are or used to be the favorite medicine of the British Empire and the subject of endless English jokes. Sir Thomas is renowned far and wide as a brilliant and talented orchestra leader. He is also one of those conductors who shakes a mean baton and does all sorts of gymnastics. He displays oodles of temperament.

That anecdote in the new issue of the Digest, relates that Sir Thomas was conducting a magnificent concert of the Philharmonic orchestra in New York. He was up there doing his stuff, swinging both hands with a mad abandon. So furious were his exertions that the strain snapped off one of his suspender buttons.

The next thing he knew his trousers were beginning to sag. Well, that was an embarrassing moment, all right. The only way Sir Thomas could hold his trousers up was to keep one hand in his pocket, and he didn't dare to make a move. He continued the rest of the concert standing stock still, with one

hand in his pocket, and moving his baton just enough to beat time.

And it didn't hurt the music at all, and Sir Thomas scored his greatest American triumph.

The mighty Toscanini is one of the conductors who doesn't do any particular acrobatics -- or, at any rate, his acrobatics are deadly serious, as when he hit the fiddler over the head with his baton. It happened in Italy and the fiddler was playing flat. Toscanini reached over and cracked him on the head with the stick.

As it happened, he hit the fiddler in the eye, and the musician went to court. That Literary Digest article tells us that he didn't have a chance. The fiddler was played flat was in front of a jury of musical experts. No, they didn't pick musicians for that jury. The explanation is that in Italy you would have a lot of trouble to get ten men together who don't consider themselves experts on music.

Toscanini said that the only way he could keep that fiddler from playing those sour notes was to reach over and smite him one. The fiddler lost the suit. The opinion of the jury was

that since he was playing flat, Toscanini should have hit him over the head with the bass fiddle, or trombone round his neck.

But with all its whimsical gaiety, that Literary Digest article points out how the orchestra conductor is useful, altho sometimes amusing. But his art is important.

1 If any of you folks want a good
2 illustration for this next item, just
3 reach into your pockets or handbags and
4 dig out a ^{thin} dime, a ten cent piece. Some
5 people seem to think that Mussolini and
6 his Fascists have ~~got~~ a lot of power, not
7 only in Italy, but also in this country.

8 The Treasury Department ^{in Washington} has been
9 receiving a number of letters pointing
10 out the fact that on one side of the
11 American dime is imprinted the symbol
12 of the Fascists. If you will look at a
13 ten cent piece issued in the last fifteen
14 years, you will see that on one side is
15 a bundle of rods with an axe. It's the
16 familiar Roman emblem, the Fasces. The
17 name of ~~the~~ Fascist comes from the
18 word "Fasces."

19 Well, the Treasury Department
20 replies that the fact that the Roman
21 emblem which Mussolini has adopted as
22 his trademark is on our own dime, isn't
23 any sign whatever of ~~the~~ Fascist
24 influence ^{in the U.S.A.} The bundle of rods and the
25 axe was put on the dime in 1916, long

1 before Mussolini or the ^{black shirts} ~~Fascists~~ were
2 ever heard of.

3 The Fasces was adopted because
4 it was the Roman symbol, and, has been,
5 ever since, a world wide symbol, ~~after~~
6 ~~xxxxx that,~~ of law and order. The bundle
7 of rods and the axe were carried in front
8 of the Roman Consul to signify the
9 majesty of the law. That's why it's ~~is~~
10 imprinted on our ten cent piece.

11 Some years later Mussolini and his
12 black shirts adopted it as a means of
13 saying that their particular program was
14 law and order. The International News
15 Service, in passing along this story,
16 also points out that on the other side
17 of the dime is imprinted the head of the
18 Roman God Mercury. Well, Mercury is
19 on our dime because he was the god of
20 merchants and symbolizes commerce.

21 At any rate, everybody can be
22 assured that the Fasces on the dime has
23 nothing to do with the Fascists of Italy.

1 A voice out of the old days is
2 heard tonight, an echo that drifts to
3 us from those vanished days of the wild
4 west and the Indians, the cowboys, the
5 scouts, the U.S. cavalry, and the long,
6 dusty, blazing trail of the desert.
7 And this reminiscing comes with one
8 telltale name--Custer.

9 In the course of President Hoover's
10 economy drive, the order has been given
11 to ~~shut~~ ^{shut} down a number of the old army
12 posts. Some of them are historic
13 places, especially in the west. I mean
14 antique forts that did heroic service
15 in the days of Indian fighting, and
16 now stand as shabby ~~and~~ yet venerable
17 reminders of an adventurous past.

18 There have been protests against
19 the abandonment of these historic forts.
20 And now a new voice is added to the
21 chorus. It is the voice of the widow
22 of General Custer.

23 ~~On~~ On Park Avenue in New York
24 lives a woman who is sometimes pointed
25 out as "that pretty old Iddy". Nearly

1 60 years ago she was the lovely young
2 bride of General George A. Custer of
3 the United States Cavalry. And he took
4 her to a lonely army post far in the
5 wilds of the Indian country of the west.

6 There she lived in the sandy
7 plain of the desert, amid the rough
8 life and the perils of those old days
9 when the Redman was making his last
10 stand.

11 That pretty old lady who lives on
12 Park Avenue gives one charming,
13 characteristically feminine bit of
14 comment.

15 "With all that dust and sun," she
16 says, "it was goodbye complexion. But,
17 fortunately, we knew our husbands didn't
18 notice. Because it's a nice thing about
19 men--if they get it into their head that
20 they have married a pretty girl, they
21 never see anything to the contrary."

22 Mrs. Custer tells a reporter of
23 the New York Evening Post how she was at
24 Fort Abraham Lincoln, at Bismarck, North
25 Dakota, when her husband sallied forth

1 the last time to fight the Indians. It
2 was three weeks before a poky old river
3 boat came paddling in and brought her
4 the news of Custer's last stand.

5 It was then that she learned the
6 story of the fight which made General
7 Custer's name a byword in American
8 history. She was told of Sitting Bull
9 and his band of Sioux--how the Indians
10 had ambushed Custer and a small ^{column} ~~band~~ of
11 cavalymen--how the Redmen on their
12 wild steeds had ridden round and round
13 the doomed band of fighting palefaces--
14 until the last ^{trooper} ~~man~~ had gone down with
15 a smoking pistol in his hand. Her
16 husband never returned, nor ^{did} a single one
17 of his men.

18 And now that pretty old lady, the
19 widow of Custer who made the last stand,
20 raises her voice against the proposed
21 abolition of those old army posts.

22 "It does seem", she declares, "as
23 if some of the old forts should be
24 saved. We should not allow every vestige
25 of the old days to die."

1 Well, they were glorious old days,
2 and we can all feel a thrill of
3 sympathy at the voice of the wife who
4 was widowed in one of the dramatic
5 episodes of our history.

6 Well, my mind is filled with
7 pictures--pictures of the old trail
8 of the West, the vanished frontier,
9 Sitting Bull and his Sioux braves in
10 their war paint, pictures of Custer's
11 Last Stand.

12 But I guess I'd better snap out
13 of it and say:

14 Solong until tomorrow.

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