

ICKES

Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, jumped into the ring with a vehement attack on business men. The occasion was a speech at the Town Hall in Detroit. They say Mr. Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior lashed out right and left. Quite bluntly and unequivocally he accused the business and financial leaders of the country of being Fascists at heart.

"We are on the crossroads", said Ickes. Then he added: "The issue before the country today is Fascism or the America of the Founding Fathers." Where have we heard that before? Communism, said the Secretary of the Interior, is no real danger in America. He described it as merely a convenient bugaboo to frighten people who are in their political childhood. "The real menace to our institutions", he declared, "are the Fascist-minded men of America whose common interest is to seize more power and greater riches for themselves." Then he continued: "It is these men who, pretending to save us from dreadful Communism, would superimpose upon our institutions the equally

dreadful Fascism." Mr. Ickes was viewing with alarm -- and dread.

While the Secretary was thus delivering himself, a new attack was being made on the Roosevelt policies in another part of the country. The National Association of Manufacturers opened their convention in New York with a biting assault upon the policies of the New Deal. Clinton L. Bardo, President of the organization, threw down the gauntlet to the White House. Said he: "Industry has been forced in sheer self-defense to jump into the political arena or be destroyed." Several other leaders of industry backed up President Bardo, saying that the convention now being held in New York was "A call to arms, to rouse the armies of industry."

MEEHAN

There's an interesting scrap going on in Washington, ~~and~~
In the one corner is the Securities ~~and~~ Exchange Commission. In
the other the adventurous and colorful Wall Street tycoon, Michael
J. Meehan. The S.E.C. is after the Meehan scalp. The Commission
wants to disbar him from the Stock ^{Exchanges} and also the Curb Exchanges of
both New York and Chicago. The accusation is that Meehan
manipulated the stocks of a certain aircraft corporation in such
a manner as to mislead the general investing public. ~~So~~ Mr.
Meehan's lawyers went to bat today to save his financial scalp.

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Michael J. Meehan is known as one of the most spectacular
~~traders~~ ^{traders} on Wall Street. He attracted the attention of the Street
from the first day ~~that~~ he appeared in it. Twenty years ago he was
selling tickets in a Broadway ^{theater} ticket office. He suddenly threw
that up and started his own commission business. He did so well
at it that five years later he was able to buy himself his first
seat on the Stock Exchange. And in Nineteen Twenty seats on the
Exchange were fetching high figures. By Nineteen Twenty-nine
Meehan was known to have accumulated a fortune well up in the
millions. During the peak of the boom he was ^{called} ~~known as~~ the

"Wild Bull of Radio". Before long he owned no fewer than eight seats on the New York Stock Exchange. He was making as much as

fifteen thousand dollars a day in commissions alone. *And*, he was
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OIL

There'll be no embargo on shipments of American oil to Italy.

That was indicated quite plainly in Washington today. The information

came to light indirectly, though clearly. It seems that the

Chilean Ambassador had become anxious about copper shipments. Most

of the copper mined in Chile is brought to the United States, to be

smelted. So the Chilean Government ^{was worrying about the} ~~had become anxious, wondering~~

^{possibility of} ~~whether~~, this profitable export trade ^{being} ~~would be~~ curtailed. But the

State Department informed ~~the~~ Chilean Excellency that there would be

no embargo upon copper. It then explained further that any such

embargo would be impossible under the terms of the Neutrality

Resolution as adopted by Congress last summer.

That means, of course, that this is also true about oil. There

can be no formal prohibition on the exports of any such products,

whether oil, copper or scrap iron, until and unless Congress amends

that Resolution and specifically instructs the President to add all

such commodities to the forbidden list.

This news of course considerably relieves the tension in

the Mediterranean. With no American embargo on oil, Italy will have

no difficulty in obtaining all she wants. Consequently, military

observers are predicting an end to the curious period of inactivity on both African fronts. Now that Italy is assured of a plentiful supply of oil, the Duce is expected to send word to his generals in Africa to start the war steam-roller once more, and also start shouting: "Viva, viva Unkly Sam!"

The report that Standard Oil has agreed to supply Italy is denied plenty. But the rumor still persists.

SPIES

A friend of mine who recently landed in Djibouti, the seaport of French Somaliland, writes me an interesting word picture of the place. Djibouti has been described as the world's worst seaport. A year ago there were six hundred white men there. Today there are six thousand. And many of those are soldiers of fortune, adventurers, even spies. But, everybody seems to have plenty of money. The open-air cabarets are crowded all the time. The bulging walls of Djibouti's four hotels resound to the noise of cocktail and champagne parties at all hours of day and night.

Underneath it all, writes my correspondent, a sinister note can be perceived. From Djibouti the tentacles of a huge espionage system stretch in five different directions:- Into the heart of Ethiopia, into Eritrea, into French, British and Italian Somaliland. The information collected is sifted and sorted out in Djibouti. Some of it comes into the city by means of the caravan drivers. By word of mouth and by written code pass military and political secrets.

The market places of the bazaars are constantly buzzing with rumors. Most of them have only the slightest foundation of fact. But even the wildest of them is collected, written down and filed away in the archives of the foreign offices of every big Power.

CHINA

The censorship in the Far East is bringing the usual results. There's a bumper rumor crop. Today's harvest again centers around the dizzy head of General Yin Ju-Keng. General Yin, who has made himself boss of the new government recently set up in northern Hopeh, was described yesterday as running for his life from an angry mob - fleeing in disguise. Today the report is that he has been assassinated. However, that has not yet been confirmed.

Hopeh's Number One man, they say, has given his countrymen ample provocation to be angry with him. He has been openly accused of being pro-Japanese, of being a stooge for the Tokio government. But, it seems quite possible that his Japanese sympathies are genuine, sincere. He went to school in Japan. What is more, he married a Japanese girl and his brother-in-law is an officer of high rank in the Mikado's army. Under such circumstance it would be rather astonishing if his sympathies were not definitely shaded. And maybe there's the color of gold too.

If the rumor of his assassination turns out to be true, it will seriously complicate the situation in northern China. Especially as the North China war lords are now showing a war-like front against the Japanese.

10
The other day ~~in~~ Tokyo celebrated the obsequies of a veteran statesman of Japan. He was the aged Masami Oishi, long honored by political eminence in the government of the island empire of Nippon. Now it is disclosed that he leaves a fortune of four hundred thousand yen. Yet - Masami Oishi was renowned in Japanese statecraft for his poverty. He was as poor as a church mouse -- or rather, as poor as a pagoda mouse. People in high places had spoken in tones of sorrow and regret that Oishi was leaving his family of fourteen children -- penniless. Ah, but here's the story that has just come to light in Tokyo.

13
Away back in 1898 Oishi was Minister of Agriculture in the Okuma - Itagaki Cabinet. When the Cabinet resigned the Emperor honored its members with gifts of money. Oishi's share was three thousand yen, about fifteen hundred dollars in our money. The statesman, Oishi, thereupon threw a big party for a large and jovial company of friends in a Tokyo restaurant. That was Oishi's way. He was a jolly statesman, even a spend-thrift statesman. That was why he remained poor all of his long life. At the climax of the feast when the saki was flowing its gayest Oishi proudly displayed to his guests -- the Imperial gift, the

1

pocketbook of money. Then ~~he~~ placed the pocketbook on a near-by shelf, there being no pockets in Japanese kimonos.

What followed was a sensational scandal of that day nearly forty years ago. When Oishi looked for the pocketbook -- it was gone. Somebody had taken it. There was a frantic search, high and low, but it was never discovered. For a statesman of Nippon to lose a present of money ~~gig~~ given to him by the Mikado that was little short of an insult to the Emperor. The unfortunate Oishi felt he ~~must~~ do penance. So he underwent a period of voluntary seclusion, solitary confinement.

A year later Oishi received a bill -- a tax bill, always annoying. Taxes on a piece of land, near Tokyo. Oishi protested indignantly. He didn't own any land. His poverty was well-known. But, the tax office proved that he was indeed the owner of the land. They showed that those acres had been bought in Oishi's name by Ryohei ^(hay) Tovokawa who had paid a price of three thousand yen. Tovokawa had been a guest at the parth during which the Emperor's three thousand yen were stolen. He was a great man of finance, a member of the famous Mitsui firm. To his financial genius might be traced the fabulous wealth of the House of Mitsui,

owners of the far flung Nippon Yusen Kaisha, N.Y.K. Line.

Tovokawa confessed. Yes, he had taken the money. He was all too familiar with his friend Oishi's spend-thrift habits. He knew that Oishi would only squander the Imperial present -- blow it in on parties as fast as he could. So he had taken the money secretly and just as secretly had invested it in that tract of land, to save the money. Tovokawa of the House of Mitsui ★ had a shrewd eye for land values. He had picked what he reckoned a first-rate real estate buy.

When the explanations were over Oishi gave little more thought to the matter -- just shrugged his shoulders and went on being poor. He had no idea of real estate value, no talent for money affairs. Why bother? He just paid the taxes on the land and let it go at that.

Now, many years later he has died, and what do his executors find? Bought with the three thousand yen presented by the Emperor, that land has now increased in value one hundred and thirty times. And they have sold it for four hundred thousand yen -- to be divided among the fourteen children of the poor, impoverished, starving statesman. Thanks, Mr. Takahashi!

RESCUE

56
A mystery of the sea has been cleared up. Sixty-eight men have been brought back from the grave, from what seemed to be the certain doom of the angry ocean. They had been missing for months, since last summer - lost in the oblivion of the wide spaces of wind and wave. ^{TP they} When ~~we~~ last heard of the sailing ship DIEGO, ^{she} ~~that ship~~ was navigating in the Indian Ocean. Then the old wind-jammer with her crew of sixty-eight, disappeared from human sight and knowledge. Only a guess could be made, a dark, well founded surmise. The disappearance of the vessel corresponded with a series of terrific Indian Ocean typhoons, one after another, lashing the sea, wrecking ~~the~~ ships.

The guess was all too true. The story we now have tells ^{how} ~~that~~ the sailing ship DIEGO was hit by sixteen successive tropical tempests. And with the sixteenth, the ^{jig} ~~game~~ was up. The ship was driven to the Chagos Archipelago. That's a maze of barren islands and coral reefs, to the south of the ^{lonely} Maldivé Islands, - midway between Madagascar and Ceylon. almost in the dead center of the Indian Ocean, ^{ship} The typhoon drove ~~the~~ vessel in among the shoals and hurled her on to the coral reef of Eagle Island. There the ~~vessel~~ ^{ship} pounded to pieces and broke up.

57

Eagle Island was deserted, except for a hoard of rats and a dozen natives come there to collect cocoanuts. They put out in canoes and helped to rescue the survivors. Not one man of the crew of the DIEGO was lost. But, there they were, marooned, Robinson Crusoe multiplied by sixty-eight, Man Friday multiplied by twelve. They remained there for months, eating cocoanuts, half starved.

Meanwhile, they were given up for lost - until along came an Irish skipper, navigating his vessel, the CLAN MacPHEE, through the Indian Ocean. His course took him near the Chagos Archipelago. Having the missing sailing ship in mind, he shaped a course amid the reefs -- shoals so perilous that he dared to sail only in daytime. But he happened by Eagle Island - and found the survivors there. The Dublin skipper took them to Peros Banhos, the largest and most populous island of the group, where they recuperated a bit. Now they've returned to port.

8
Some people have a flair, a genius, or should we say mania, for seeing the odd, the curious, ~~and~~ the cockeyed. Take, for instance, that roving Britisher with a wild sense of humor, Carveth Wells. He has been off on another trek, this time roaming up and down Mexico and Central America. And here are a couple of the curious things he flashes to me in a bulletin:- Panama is the only tropical country in the world where a fly swatter is absolutely useless. ~~And~~ There being no flies to swat! The Army and Navy officials in charge of the Panama Canal always wear civilian clothes. And, many of you know this one:- At Panama City the sun rises in the Pacific! And sets in the Atlantic.

3 1/2
But here's the goofiest one of all. In the Canal Zone, says Carveth, there is a jungle-covered island named Barro Colorado where University Professors are kept in cages while the ~~an~~ animals run about loose, and frequently visit the professors and look at them in ~~their~~ their cages.

And this next one is almost as fantastic:- Says this explorer in search of things to laugh at, "I met a Dr. March in Panama who has been bitten so often by poisonous snakes and is so full of snake-bite serum that a Fer de Lance (most deadly of all

reptiles) bit the Doctor recently, and the snake died from the effects.

And that ought to entitle Carveth to this year's tall story prize. The prize being a commission as second lieutenant in the Ethiopian Army leading a charge.