

BONUS

Lowell Thomas' Broadcast Page
for The Literary Digest.
Wednesday, February 18, 1931.

Good Evening, Everybody!

1 ~~Tonight's~~ news about the Soldier's
2 Bonus Bill is that the Senate Finance
3 Committee voted on it this afternoon.
4 The vote was 13 to 3 in favor of ~~the~~
5 ~~bonus measure.~~

6 President Hoover stepped in to try
7 to block the passage of that ~~bonus~~ bill.
8 According to the United Press, the
9 President wrote a letter to Senator Smoot
10 in which he stated that if the bill were
11 passed it would add to the present
12 financial depression. Nevertheless,
13 even Senator Watson, the regular
14 Republican leader, turned against the
15 President on this measure, ~~and voted for~~
16 ~~the bonus.~~

17 And so the Senate Finance Committee
18 has passed the bill along. And the next
19 thing now is for it to be voted on by
20 the Senate itself. The belief in
21 Washington is that the Senate will pass
22 the bill, that President Hoover will veto
23 it, and that Congress will then promptly
24 pass it over his head.

25 A bonus tidal wave is running down
in Washington.

1 The United Press wires an
2 interesting bit of comment from Washington.
3 ~~today~~. It points out how Nick Longworth,
4 Speaker of the House of Representatives,
5 is gradually increasing in power and
6 importance. They say that he is raising
7 the office of Speaker almost to the
8 height of influence which it enjoyed
9 in the days of the renowned "Uncle Joe"
10 Cannon.

11 ~~Now~~ Hitherto Speaker Longworth
12 has shared the Republican leadership
13 in the House with the Republican floor
14 leader, Congressman Tilson, of Connecticut.
15 But in the recent fights over Drought
16 Relief and the Soldiers Bonus, Mr. Tilson
17 has supported President Hoover. Mr.
18 Longworth has taken an opposite position
19 and in each case has won a big victory.
20 That puts him in the driver's seat, ~~at~~
21 ~~right~~, and many of the old-timers are
22 looking at the ~~husband~~ husband of Alice
23 Roosevelt and are ~~remembering~~ ^{remembering} the old days
24 of the autocratic rule of "Uncle Joe"
25 Cannon.

They are saying that Nick Longworth may achieve Uncle Joe's power - but he can never achieve Uncle Joe's whiskers.

MUSCLE SHOALS

Here's a familiar old name - MUSCLE SHOALS.

~~The International News Service reports that~~ ^T the Senate and the House of Representatives have finally reached a compromise agreement on the subject of Muscle Shoals. The compromise is said to be that the government will operate the big power plant and the government will construct transmission lines to carry electrical power to nearby cities; but that the nitrate plants will all be leased to private enterprise.

Well, that Muscle Shoals controversy has been on for ten years now. And it's time to kiss it goodbye.

1 There was an exciting session of
2 the New York State Senate at Albany
3 today. The Senators were debating
4 charges of corruption in New York City.
5 They voted on a bill calling for a
6 State investigation into conditions in
7 the Metropolis.

8 All the New York papers this
9 afternoon are carrying big headlines
10 which tell us that the Bill was
11 defeated and that the State Senate
12 decided not to have an investigation.

13 This is just the latest event in
14 a series of spectacular political
15 sensations in New York City.

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1 There ~~was~~ ^{been} a bad mine disaster near
2 ~~at~~ Scranton, Pennsylvania. An
3 explosion occurred in a/~~coal~~ ^{Coal} shaft,
4 and 5 miners were buried under tons
5 of debris. The International News
6 Service states that rescuers are
7 working frantically this evening
8 in the faint hope that the mēn may
9 be alive.

1 Now for a treasure hunt--but a
2 ■ treasure hunt with a difference. It's
3 ■ not a case of gold or of diamonds. *This*
4 ~~The~~ treasure consists of sponges.

5 Tonight two sailing ships, out of
6 Sarasota, Florida, are on their way to
7 the Central American coast. They will
8 anchor off ■■■■ Nicaragua■ and divers
9 will go down and look for sponge beds.

10 According to the United Press,
11 the sponge beds along the southern
12 coast of the United States are showing
13 signs of being fished out. The sponge
14 ships from Florida have been going
15 further and further afield. And now
16 rumors have come of great sponge beds
17 off the coast of Central America. And
18 so the schooner and the sloop are on
19 their way ~~to find out~~ *in search of an*
20 *eldorado of sponges.*

1 At Patterson, New Jersey,
2 Patrolman Helgenhurst was pounding the
3 pavement along his beat when an
4 automobile stopped in the street in
5 front of him.

6 According to the New York World,
7 the driver called to the cop and asked
8 the cop to push the car a bit to help
9 get it started again. The battery
10 was dead. The cop looked closely
11 and recognized the car as his own. It
12 had been stolen. The man in it was the
13 thief.

14 And that was quite a break for
15 a Patterson, New Jersey, cop. *It surely*
16 *was his lucky day.*

1 Now comes a bit of news which
2 seems as though it might bring down
3 the final curtain on an old story.

4 Out in Massillon, Ohio, lives
5 General Jacob Coxey, who led the famous
6 march of Coxey's army. ^{The General has just received} ~~He just got~~
7 a letter from a middle aged Minnesota
8 farm^{er} woman. She tells him that ^{at} the
9 time of the march of Coxey's army of
10 unemployed to Washington, some of the
11 men passed by her father's farm. Her
12 father gave them food and a place to
13 sleep, and ^{in return} they stole some pots and
14 pans and knives and forks.

15 She says that she knew little
16 English ^{in those days} ~~at the time~~ but as years passed
17 she learned the language of the country
18 and only recently saw that the General
19 Coxey of Coxey's army was still alive.
20 And so ~~now~~ she was writing him to demand
21 ~~from him~~ an apology for the kitchen
22 utensils ^{stolen by} ~~which~~ his men. ~~had stolen.~~

23 Well, General Coxey has ^{replied}
24 ~~written a reply~~ that he has no apology
25 to offer. He says the men that stole

the kitchen utensils were not members of Coxey's army. He knows that, because none of his followers came from Minnesota. He implies that it was just a case of hoboes posing as Coxey's grenadiers.

An Associated Press dispatch states that the executives of the Royal Aero Club of Great Britain have closed the list of entries for the Schneider Cup. The list has been made up and no other names will be added. Bill, Al Williams, the human bullet, wants to take an American plane over there and see if he can't fly faster than the Europeans, but he won't be able to do it.

One of the officials in charge of the race said today: WE WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMMODATE THE UNITED STATES, BUT WE COULDN'T POSSIBLY ALTER THE RULES.

The British hold the cup now, and France and Italy are out to try and capture it for themselves. And Uncle Sam will be among those missing.

AIRPLANE

Now here's one that's too bad. It seems as though Uncle Sam will not be represented in the next Schneider Cup Race, and that there won't be any American high speed planes in there competing for the famous prize.

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1 Of late there has been a good deal
2 of talk about slavery in Liberia. The
3 League of Nations came to the front and
4 told the Black Republic that it ought
5 to get an Abraham Lincoln for itself and
6 sign an emancipation proclamation.

7 Well, there are some people saying:
8 WHY PICK ON LIBERIA?

9 In fact, a lot of listeners-in have
10 written me asking that question.

11 The new Literary Digest comes out
12 tomorrow and it quotes a Berlin newspaper
13 which remarks mockingly that of course
14 slavery has been abolished throughout
15 most of the world, but that a condition
16 exactly like slavery still exists in the
17 dominions of some of the very same great
18 powers that are holding up hands of pious
19 horror over the existence of slavery in
20 Liberia.

21 The Berlin editor states that in
22 more than one European African dominion
23 slavery exists in various forms, ~~although~~
24 ~~it may not go by the name of slavery.~~
25 Black men get into debt and then are

never allowed to get out.

That Digest article goes on to point out how, according to some authorities, there is still slavery in South America; so Liberia has plenty of company and there are lots of nations that have no right to raise their eyebrows.

All of which sounds like this is still a somewhat imperfect world.

1 Let's see. *Yes, boys you can go to*
2 *college but you'll have to* ~~I guess this next item~~
3 ~~seems to be a case of~~ check your guns
4 at the Registrar's Office.

5 Down in Mexico the authorities of
6 the National University have decreed
7 that no student hereafter shall carry a
8 pistol, unless he has a special permit.
9 This is a result of a jambouree in which
10 a freshman was shot in the leg.

11 The Associated Press informs us
12 that behind it all is the fact that
13 some of the students are objecting to
14 the way other students are taking up
15 American ideas. Take sideburns, for
16 instance, *or Burnsides as they used to call them.*
17 ~~They're supposed to be an~~
18 American custom. One freshman had a
19 noble pair, ~~and until~~
20 ~~of sideburns on his face, and~~
21 he fell into the hands of the Terrorist
22 Committee, which is trying to stamp
23 out American ways. The Terrorist Committee
24 condemned him to have his head shaved.
25 One of the students was shaving the
chaps'
~~student's~~ head when the victim broke
away. The other pulled a gun and shot
him in the leg.

Another of the American customs under ban is chewing gum. Students who've been exercising their jaws have had their mouths scoured with flour.

Well, that campaign against American customs is still in full swing, but from now on they'll have to do it without benefit of guns.

The new cabinet will try to work out some way of avoiding the alternatives of turning Spain into either a Republic or a military dictatorship. The United Press informs us that Prime Minister Aznar intends to call a constitutional convention to revise the old Spanish constitution, and in that way work out a system of Parliamentary Government.

1 This evening things are quieter
2 in Spain. ^a The cabinet government has
3 been formed. But it doesn't consist of
4 the Liberal elements whose support
5 King Alphonso wanted to gain.

6 According to the Associated Press,
7 the King finally had to fall back on his
8 loyal friends, the Conservatives. He
9 ~~■~~ called upon Admiral Aznar, the oldest
10 officer in the Spanish navy, to get a
11 cabinet together that would represent
12 the Conservative elements. The Admiral
13 is supposed to be a neutral in politics,
14 but he ^{managed to} lined up the hard-shelled
15 Monarchists. ~~And~~ So today Spain has a
16 new government.

17 The ^{conservative} ~~new~~ cabinet will try to work
18 out some way of avoiding the alternatives
19 of turning Spain into either a Republic
20 or a military dictatorship. The United
21 Press informs us that Prime Minister
22 Aznar intends to call a constitutional
23 convention to revise the old Spanish
24 constitution, and in that way work out
25 a system of Parliamentary government

1 that will work smoothly.

2 Meanwhile, however, there is
3 plenty of discontent in Spain, and
4 tomorrow ■ evening I may be telling
5 about some new crisis.

6 *Things seem to have a way*
7 *of happening with dramatic suddenness*
8 *over there at present.*

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1 From this next dispatch it seems
2 as if somebody were admitting something
3 that may be important. *Let's look it over.*

4 ~~Over~~ In Russia the Secretary of
5 the Communist Party made an address
6 before the Congress of Soviets of the
7 Northern District of Archangel, ^{In it} ~~and~~ he ^{hotly}
8 denied that lumber in northern Russia
9 was being produced entirely by forced
10 labor. He said that 200,000 workers
11 were employed in the lumber districts,
12 and that somewhat more than half of these
13 were on the job voluntarily. In other
14 words, ~~somewhat~~ less than half of the
15 labor employed comes under the heading
16 of forced labor.

3
17 The Bolsheviks are hot under the
18 collar because the United States Government
19 has stopped the importation of Russian
20 lumber. Our government claims that
21 Russian lumber is being produced by
22 means of forced labor. And the address
23 made by the Secretary of the Communist
24 Party was to show that Uncle Sam was all
25 wrong. It looks, however, as if he

1 admitted that Uncle Sam was at least
2 partly right.

3 The New York Evening Post informs
4 us that the forced labor used in the
5 Russian lumber camps consist of kulaks,
6 and these kulaks are Russian peasants
7 who didn't want to give up their land.

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1 Well, folks, I don't want to
2 inflict an old chestnut on you such as
3 saying that truth is stranger than
4 ~~poetry~~ ^{fiction} ~~poetry~~, but those old chestnuts
5 have a way of being so pat that ~~you~~ we just
6 ~~cannot~~ ^{can't} get away from them.

7 I have a few strange facts here
8 that you might think were contributed
9 by the members of the Tall Story Club.
10 But they were not. They are sober
11 facts out of the records of ~~the~~ an
12 Insurance Company.

13 For example, a young man was
14 holding a young lady on his knee. His
15 leg went to sleep and when he arose that
16 sleeping leg doubled under him and he
17 ~~fell~~ fell and hurt himself. He collected
18 from the Insurance Company.

19 Another case, a man collected
20 insurance for broken ribs which he got
21 when his best girl hugged him.

22 Another policy holder fell
23 over a sleeping cow. Still another ~~xx~~
24 policy holder was riding on a motorcycle
25 at night when he ran into an elephant.

The new Literary Digest that comes out tomorrow, quoting from an article in the American Weekly, gives a whole series of these freak accidents. There is the man who had an ear cut off by his derby hat and the Californian who was shot while mowing grass when his lawn mower hit a cartridge and exploded it.

Yes, and there's one that will make the Tall Story Club members ashamed of themselves. A milk wagon driver out in Evanston, Ohio, was getting some gasoline for his truck. He got some gasoline on the tails of his white coat and a cigaret butt set the coat tail on fire. The milk driver tore off the coat and tossed it away. It lit on the tail of a horse. The horse swished his tail and tossed the burning coat into a pile of hay. The hay caught fire and then the fire spread and did an immense amount of damage.

Yes, truth is stranger than fiction, and there's many a true story that's taller than a tall story.

1 On St. Valentine's Day I bewailed
2 into the microphone that among the
3 valentines I got, there weren't any
4 funny ones.

5 But that is all past and gone now
6 because a ^{number} ~~vast army~~ of radio listeners
7 have remedied the deficiency and sent me
8 a stack of comic valentines that reminded
9 me of the old days.

10 One of them shows a fellow with a
11 terrible looking face driving a terrible
12 looking car, and the lines below the
13 picture read like this:

14 "A tiny child would like your car,
15 It has every kind of rattle,
16 Whene'er you travel down the street,
17 The folks say, "Where's the battle?"

18 Well, those are familiar sentiments
19 because I did have a car once that fitted
20 that description to a "T". Yes, and what
21 a sensation it would make if I drove it
22 clankety-clank, biff-bang, down Fifth
23 Avenue tonight. In fact, I can almost
24 imagine that I'm going out now ^{once more} to drive
25 that old wreck home ~~once more~~ after saying -
-- so long until tomorrow.