

INTRO.

LOWELL THOMAS BROADCAST
FOR THE LITERARY Page _____
DIGEST, SATURDAY, JULY 25,
1931

1
2 GOOD EVENING, EVERYBODY:

3 There are some stories of
4 extraordinary heroism in the news tonight.
5 They have to do with ^{the} a disastrous fire in
6 Pittsburgh, ^{the fire that} ~~which~~ destroyed the Home of
7 the Little Sisters of the Poor, a home for
8 the poor and aged.

9 The account of the fire has been in
10 the newspapers all over the country today,
11 a story brief and tragic. In the Little
12 Sisters Home for the aged and poor, there
13 were 213 inmates and 18 nuns. A fire
14 broke out last night, in the dead of night.
15 It wasn't noticed at first; and it spread
16 with alarming and awful rapidity.

17 Then came a scene of pity and terror.
18 Most of the inmates were too old and
19 feeble to move fast and some of them were
20 blind. 31 lives were lost. The injured
21 number 200.

22 I received a copy of ~~today's~~ ^{the}
23 Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph by airplane mail
24 late this afternoon. The first three
25 pages are solid with stories and pictures
of the catastrophe--and the stories are
gripping in the heroism they reveal.

The firemen displayed their usual

1 bravery in carrying half-suffocated
2 victims from the blazing building; but these
3 firemen declare that many more would have
4 perished if it hadn't been for the
5 volunteer rescuers. Citizens of the
6 neighborhood, roused out of their sleep,
7 dashed into that inferno of smoke and
8 flames and carried out the helpless old
9 people.

10 One boy of 16 climbed through a
11 window to make a rescue. His arms were
12 ripped on the broken glass and then he
13 fell choking with the smoke. They dragged
14 him out and the First-Aid Squad had to
15 work on him for 45 minutes before they
16 could bring him to.

17 Both firemen and volunteer rescuers
18 tell us of astonishing courage and calmness
19 displayed by those old folks and by the
20 nuns in the face of death. Let me give
21 you an incident or two, of which the
22 Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph tells us.

23 Frank B. Michaels, one of the
24 first men inside the burning building
25 says that he saw no panic. "I carried

1 4 people out", he relates. "I saw many
2 on their knees praying. One little
3 woman was at an upper window, crying
4 for help. As the smoke started pouring
5 through the window around her, we saw
6 her make the Sign of the Cross and close
7 the window. We never saw her again."

8 Hugh L. McConnville was ~~one of~~ among
9 the rescuers who forced their way through
10 the smoke of the third floor.

11 "All the old mën", he tells us,
12 "stood by the women comforting them to
13 the end. We had to rescue them almost
14 against their will.*"

15 "Up on the third floor mën and
16 women were on their knees praying. The
17 women were even calmer than the mën".

18 The firemen found a nun wandering
19 about in the smoke. She told her
20 rescuers to let her alone. "I can't
21 leave now", she said, "Mother Superior
22 is still in here. I am her assistant
23 and I must find her and help her." They
24 had to take hold of the black-garbed Sister
25 by force and carry her down the ladder.

1 It was only after ~~those~~^{the} old people
2 had been rescued and were safe outside
3 the burning building that their calmness
4 deserted them and many became hysterical.

5 Well, there are a number of men
6 in Pittsburgh who worked bravely as
7 rescuers in that dreadful fire and
8 they'll be talking to the end of their
9 lives about the serene courage ~~of those~~
10 ~~people~~ in the face of death, *of those aged people*
11 ~~inmates~~ *in* the home of The Little
12 Sisters of the Poor.

1 A plot against the King of
2 Belgium is reported by the Associated
3 Press. King Albert and the royal family
4 presided at the dedication of a statue
5 to commemorate a royal anniversary. It is
6 just 100 years since the present reigning
7 dynasty of Belgium ascended the throne.

8 ~~The~~ The King and his family were placed on a
9 sort of elevated stage. The beams of this
10 ~~had been~~ ^{were} partly cut through ^{by the conspirators.} The idea
11 was that the weight of the persons
12 standing on the platform would cause the
13 beams to give way and there would be a
14 collapse, with perhaps fatal results.
15 But the plot didn't work out right, and
16 there was no ~~troubles~~ ^{mishap.}

17 The police say Flemish agitators
18 are to blame. The people of Belgium are
19 divided into two nationalities, and the
20 Flemish claim they are being down-trodden.

21 This attempt against the royal
22 family of Belgium took place last Sunday,
23 but the news has just leaked out.
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1 In a small bleak room in the
2 Sōviet ^{capitol} city of Moscow a motherly middle-
3 aged woman had a ray of light and hope
4 brought to her today. A Russian
5 correspondent of the Associated Press had
6 hunted for her and found her. And now
7 he told her a story that had been
8 flashed to the outside world yesterday.

9 A great deal of noise and
10 flub-dub is surrounding the visit of
11 Lady Astor and George Bernard Shaw to
12 Sōviet Russia. The newspapers of the
13 world have been following that visit,
14 expecting to be regaled with all sorts
15 of witty wisecracks from the brilliant
16 Irish dramatist and also from Lady
17 Astor, ~~whom~~ who is noted for a sharp
18 and ready tongue. Thus far Shaw seems to
19 ~~have been~~ ^{be} keeping silent. Lady Astor
20 ~~was~~ ^{is} doing the talking.

21 However, the highspot of that
22 Russian tour does not come in any
23 scintillating epigram. It takes the form
24 of a bit of lurid play-acting. But
25 there's also a vein of deep human feeling

1 in the episode.

2 We were told yesterday how there
3 was a grand Bolshevik reception for
4 George Bernard Shaw and Lady Astor. Even
5 the Bolsheviks throw parties. And right
6 in the middle of things Lady Astor put
7 on her big act. She walked up to Maxim
8 Litvinoff, the Commisar of Foreign
9 Affairs of the Soviet government. Her
10 Noble Ladyship threw herself on her knees
11 before Litvinoff and cried in a thrilling
12 voice:

13 "I present you this as a peasant
14 to a Czar."

15 *JP Whereupon* ~~And~~ she handed Litvinoff a
16 telegram. It was addressed to Lady Astor,
17 and this is the way it read:- IN THE
18 NAME OF HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES, I APPEAL
19 TO YOU TO HELP MY WIFE.

20 And it was signed by Professor
21 Dmitri Krynin of Yale University.

22 It was further explained that
23 Madam Krynin was being held in Russia
24 by the Soviet government and ^{had} ~~was~~ not *been*
25 allowed to join her husband and her son

1 in the United States.

2 The cynical Commisar of Foreign
3 Affairs read the telegram and replied
4 coldly to the ~~■~~ noble English lady who
5 was still dramatically kneeling before
6 him, that he couldn't do anything about
7 it. The matter was not in his
8 jurisdiction.

9 Later on Lady Astor tried to
10 appeal to the heads of the Soviet police,
11 but they wouldn't ^{even} see her.

12 The theatrical outbreak that
13 she staged at the big party doesn't seem
14 calculated to impress gentlemen as
15 hard-boiled as the Soviet leaders -- or
16 maybe Her Noble Ladyship was having a
17 bit of a joke. Maybe she was using the
18 appealing telegram as a means of having
19 a little fun. Shaw got an identical
20 telegram from the ^{Yale} ~~■~~ Professor. And if
21 he's doing anything about it, why, the
22 playwright is using somewhat less
23 theatrical tactics. *He isn't getting on his knees*
24 *to anybody.* The next thing on the program
25 was for an Associated Press correspondent

1 to look up Madam Krynin. He found her
2 in a dingy room which she has occupied
3 ever since she was separated from her
4 husband and her son. He told her of
5 her husband's ^{dramatic telegraphic} appeal and of how Lady
6 Astor had presented it to Litvinoff.
7 He added that Lady Astor would pay her
8 a visit within the next few days. ^{TF} The
9 middle-aged woman who for years has
10 lived under the curse of being a member
11 of the intellectual classes in Soviet
12 Russia, replied simply that it would
13 not be well for a noble British lady to
14 visit a poor woman in such poor living-
15 quarters.

16 She explained that she wasn't
17 so badly off. Her husband sent her
18 packages of food from the United States.
19 And so she was not hungry. But she was
20 not allowed to leave Russia. She had
21 tried her best to get permission from the
22 Soviets to leave the country and join
23 her husband at son at Yale. But they
24 had refused. She didn't know why, except
25 that her husband was a Professor, a

(6)

1 member of the intellectual classes and
2 opposed to Communism. During the War
3 he was an officer of road construction
4 and then became a Professor in the
5 Moscow Technical University and a
6 consulting engineer for the government.
7 But she still hopes^s that some day she
8 will be allowed to ~~him~~ leave and go to
9 her husband and her son.

10 Meanwhile here in America
11 Professor Krynin of Yale explains that
12 he sent a telegram to Shaw and Lady
13 Astor just as a means of focusing public
14 attention on the plight of his wife.
15 He hopes that Shaw and Lady Astor will
16 do something to help him to re-unite
17 his family and bring his wife to live in
18 the pleasant home in the shadow of the
19 elms of Yale.

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1 Well, things seem to be
2 brightening a bit for the intellectual
3 and technical classes in Russia. They
4 are putting into effect that new policy
5 announced by Stalin, the Red diotator; *the*
policy
6 according to which engineers and
7 scientists will get better treatment,
8 even though they're not Communists.

9 Some time ago a large group
10 of aviation engineers were tried and
11 sentenced to death by the Sōviet courts.
12 They were convicted of what the Bolsheviks
13 call "economic counter-revolution" --
5
14 that is, those engineers were not working
15 with any enthusiastic efficiency for the
16 cause of Communism.

17 Many a technician in Russia has
18 been condemned and shot ^{by the} dreaded O.G.P.U.
19 under similar charges. But the
20 sentences of these aviation engineers
21 were commuted, and they were condemned
22 to life imprisonment. The United Press
23 tells us that while in confinement they
24 went ahead with their aviation work.
25 They designed new types of planes and
new instruments of aviation.

1 And now the Red dictator's
2 new scheme of going easy on the
3 technicians has had its effect. The
4 aviation engineers have been pardoned
5 and released from prison. And added to
6 that, they have been given cash rewards.
7 Two of them have been given 10,000
8 rubles -- 5,000 dollars each. And the
9 others have been rewarded by smaller,
10 though substantial sums of money.

11 Yes, it does seem as if the
12 harshness of Communism ^{were} ~~is~~ easing up a
13 bit.

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SHAKESPEARE

Here's a good subject for a guessing contest. How much money did Shakespeare make? What was the salary that the Bard of Avon drew down?

In this week's Literary Digest we are told of an Illinois Professor who has been working for years, examining all the documents that bear on the subject -- and that subject is, HOW MUCH MAJUMA DID SHAKESPEARE TAKE HOME EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT TO THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS?

The Literary Digest informs us that the Professor has figured out that the average earnings of the greatest English poet was about 250 pounds per year, -- in other words, about 12 hundred and 50 dollars.

And that certainly sounds like a meagre, paltry, sniveling sum for the man whose plays are the top-ranking classics of the English language. However, the Literary Digest quotes the London Diarist as pointing out that 12 hundred and 50 a year was not to be sneezed at in Shakespeare's day. The cost of living was less. Money was worth more. And according to modern valuations Shakespeare's 1,250 dollar income would be figured

to be worth about 2 thousand pounds a year -- that is, 10 thousand dollars in today's coin of the realm.

And that isn't such a bad income, -- 200 bucks a week.

Most writers nowadays would be tickled with it. But just the same there are many playwrights of the present day to whom the money that Shakespeare got would be just small change, just chicken feed.

1 In New York today a politician
2 from across the river in New Jersey was
3 found walking along without shoes, coat,
4 or hat -- and a pair of handcuffs were
5 on his hands. It's all a good deal of a
6 mystery.

7 The New Jersey politician is
8 Johnny Hanna, who disappeared last
9 Wednesday under highly melodramatic
10 circumstances.

11 He is a lieutenant to a
12 prominent political leader in Hudson
13 County. He was taking it easy at
14 political headquarters when a couple of
15 men entered with guns in their hands.
16 Warning the others in the place not to
17 interfere, they snapped a pair of hand-
18 cuffs on Hanna's wrists and marched him
19 out to a waiting automobile. The car
20 went speeding away. And the general
21 supposition was that Hanna was being
22 taken for a ride and that it wouldn't be
23 long before his body would be found at
24 some roadside.

25 But today he re-appeared in New

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1 York City with those same handcuffs
2 still on his wrists. He tells how his
3 captors blindfolded him by binding
4 strips of courtplaster across his eyes.
5 They kept him a prisoner in a house for
6 three days, tied to a bed.

7 This morning they put him in a
8 car again and with one ^{captor accompanying him} ~~man driving~~ ~~he~~
9 ~~he~~ was whizzed along. The strips of
10 courtplaster over his eyes had worked
11 loose, and he could see through one
12 corner. Observing that they were passing
13 beside a vacant lot which was covered
14 with bushes, he jumped out of the car,
15 dashed away and hid in a clump of green.
16 The police are inclined to believe that
17 the kidnappers didn't mind his escaping.
18 They intended to set him free anyway.

19 Hanna's explanation of the
20 strange incident, which the International
21 News Service ^{passes on to us,} ~~gives out~~, is that he was
22 being held for ransom. He thinks so
23 anyway. However, it appears that no
24 demand for ransom was made. And that
25 makes the case all the more mysterious.

1 I'll just keep one eye on
2 the clock here ^{for a moment now} while I hurry through a
3 story about a clock.

4 In Paris is the Church of Notre
5 Dame des Victoires. The Church has a
6 big outside clock which is said to be
7 the finest timepiece in Paris -- that
8 is, it was considered the finest
9 timepiece until it started doing some
10 funny tricks.

11 One day it stopped at 10:45 in
12 the morning. They started it going
13 again, but the next day it stopped
14 again at 10:45. The clockmaker
15 examined the big timepiece and said
16 the works were O.K. There was no
17 reason why the clock shouldn't keep
18 perfect time. But just the same every
19 day the clock ^{kept on} ~~stopped~~ ^{going} at 45 minutes
20 past 10.

21 Somebody did a bit of sleuthing,
22 and the mystery was solved. The
23 International News Service gives the
24 explanation.

25 Every day at 10:40 a pigeon

1 flew up to the clock and alighted on
2 the minute hand. The clock kept going
3 all right. But at 10:45 this pigeon
4 was joined by his mate. And the
5 combined weight of the two birds held
6 down the minute hand and stopped the
7 clock.

8 Well, unfortunately there
9 aren't any two pigeons to perch them-
10 selves on the minute hand of the clock
11 here ^{on my desk.} That minute hand just keeps
12 moving on and ^{on - and} compels me to say --

13 SO LONG UNTIL MONDAY.
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