

Lowell Thomas' Broadcast
for The Literary Digest.
Thursday, January 1, 1931.

INTRO.

Good evening, everybody.

Well, the New Year has begun rather quietly so far as news goes. The first day of 1931 has been fairly peaceful over most of the world. Of course there has been a little trouble in a few places -- there always has been since Adam and Eve lost their happy home in the Garden of Eden.

A lot of miners went on strike over in Wales, they had rather a wild New Years Day in Berlin, and there was a kidnaping out in St. Louis. But for the most part the news is pleasant with even a smile lurking here and there between the lines.

A traffic cop got a medal that didn't exactly make him throw out his chest. There's a dispatch about diamond-studded snowballs up in Connecticut and something dramatic concerning politics in Washington.

MERGER

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That big railroad merger, which was announced by the President day before yesterday, will result in two more railroads pushing on into New York, ^{that is right over to Manhattan Island,} These are the Baltimore & Ohio, and the Chesapeake & Ohio-Nickel Plate ^{system:} ~~Lines~~. A Washington dispatch to the New York Herald Tribune says that they will now get direct access to New York City, just like the Pennsylvania and the New York Central.

1 Bit by bit a dramatic story
2 has been coming to us ~~over the wires~~
3 from Washington these past few days. It
4 has to do with that political controversy
5 between Robert Lucas, Executive Director
6 of the National Committee of the
7 Republican Party, and Senator Norris,
8 the insurgent Republican leader from
9 Nebraska.

10 The whole hullabaloo came up
11 with dramatic suddenness at a meeting of
12 that Senatorial Campaign Investigating
13 Committee. I mean the one headed by
14 Senator Nye, who is an insurgent
15 Republican also.

16 The Nye Committee, as you know,
17 has been investigating the various
18 campaign~~x~~ expenditures made in connection
19 with the big election last November.

20 Well, the Nye Committee was
21 in session. The proceedings were going
22 along in humdrum fashion. Then a man
23 arose from among the spectators. Strange
24 to say the man was not one of the
25 witnesses who had been summoned. He

1 just stood right up in meeting and
2 blurted out that he was ~~merely~~ there in
3 the interest of the public and the ~~whole~~
4 truth. The name of this visitor was
5 Charles I. Stengle, Editor of the
6 National Farm News.

7 ~~As you can imagine,~~ It was
8 just like a stage play, where somebody
9 entirely unexpected, suddenly explodes a
10 ~~the~~ bombshell.

11 Mr. Stengle told the Committee
12 that he had received \$665. which had
13 been handed to him in bills by Mr.
14 Lucas. Why? Ah, that was ~~just~~ what
15 started one of the most interesting
16 political fights seen in this country
17 in a long time.

18 Mr. Lucas, Executive Director
19 of the Republican National Committee,
20 was putting that money into circulation
21 to help one of the candidates running
22 for senator out in Nebraska.

23 The Republican candidate was
24 Senator Norris. The Democratic candidate
25 was Mr. Hitchcock. But Mr. Lucas,

1 although Executive Director of the
2 Republican National Committee, was not
3 out to help the Republican candidate.
4 ~~x~~ He was putting up the money to help
5 the Democrat. That was the bombshell.

6 Mr. Lucas was then brought before
7 the Committee and he promptly admitted
8 that he had secretly distributed con-
9 siderable money to help elect the
10 Democrat, and beat Senator Norris.

11 However, as you know, Senator Norris
12 was re-elected.

13 Well, the full story of that
14 dramatic meeting of the Nye Investigating
15 Committee appears in ^{this week's} ~~the New~~ Literary
16 Digest, ~~which came out this morning,~~
17 ~~a day ahead of time on account of~~
18 ~~New Years~~

19 The Digest quotes the Washington
20 correspondent of the Baltimore Sun, and
21 then goes on to tell just how things
22 have developed in the course of the big
23 fight. Mr. Lucas declares that he was
24 simply helping an open Democrat against
25 a Republican whom the Republicans look

upon as no Republican at all, in fact whom they look upon as Democrat masking as a Republican.

Senator Norris and the other insurgents in the Senate denounced Mr. Lucas, and you can imagine how hot under the collar they are.

It's a great story and you will enjoy reading the full account in this week's Digest.

JOFFRE

Now here is some peculiar confusion:- It concerns Marshal Joffre. It was reported that the Secretary of Prime Minister Steeg of France had made an announcement that the hero of the Marne had died. On the other hand four physicians attending Joffre have now issued a signed statement that the Marshal is still alive, and that his condition is still about the same.

1 The New Year ushered in a big
2 strike over in England--that is, in
3 Wales. 155,000 mine ^{no}~~workers~~ walked out.
4 The government had been trying to bring
5 about an agreement between the miners
6 and the mine owners ~~■~~ but failed, ~~and~~ so
7 the strike is on. According to the
8 ~~International News Service~~ ^{United Press}, there were
9 ~~already~~ 180,000 men ^{already} out of work in
10 South Wales, and that number is almost
11 doubled now.

NEWS ITEM

I dropped in at Tony Sarg's marionette show this afternoon to pick up my youngster, and stopped for a moment to have a chat with Tony. He was telling me about one funny thing or another, and then he picked my News Item of the Day for me.

"I drive a car a good deal," said Tony. "And so do a lot of other people. They'll all appreciate this tale of an absent-minded cop."

Well, this story will please all you people who live in fear of traffic cops, and are always expecting to get a ticket.

Up at White Plains, New York, there's a cop who certainly began the New Year in the right way. The New York Herald Tribune tells us that he was pounding his beat when he saw a peculiar looking limousine parked right next to a "No Parking" sign. There was no driver in it, and he just made out a ticket and hung it on the steering wheel.

Well now, I'll give you three guesses as to what this funny-looking limousine was. That Patrolman certainly was absent-minded, because the vehicle was a patrol wagon, yes the pie wagon,

the old Black Maria! Now, a cop that doesn't recognize the patrol wagon when he sees it certainly does deserve a pair of Sister Susie's pink crocheted handcuffs. And this Patrolman had often ridden in that same Black Maria and had helped ~~xxx~~ many a prisoner into it for a ride around to the station house.

The patrol wagon wasn't in active service any more. It had been sold to an automobile firm. The owners obeyed the summons and went to court, and then the whole White Plains police force burst into laughter. Today his brother officers gave the blushing cop a beautiful shiny tin medal to commemorate his having innocently hung a ticket on a patrol wagon.

1 Right here I'm enthralled by the
2 pleasant vision of being hit on the head
3 with a snowball and having a jewel drop
4 out of that snowball.

5 ~~out~~ ^{at} Hartford, Connecticut, two
6 young burglars took a lot of jewelry
7 they had stolen; and ^{they} wrapped bracelets,
8 necklaces, and rings up in snowballs.
9 They were running away from the police
10 and ^{they} snatched the snow as they ran, and
11 when they had the jewelry made into
12 snowballs they ^{tossed them} ~~threw those snowballs~~ into
13 the river. They've told the police
14 where they threw those diamond-studded
15 snowballs. But, according to the New York
16 Herald Tribune, the water was 20 feet
17 deep and there's a lot of ice in the
18 river. So they'll have to wait until
19 spring to dredge for the jewels.

20 *I wouldn't mind being bombarded*
21 *by diamond studded snowballs myself.*
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NICARAGUA

Here's a late flash. The Navy Department announces that eight marines have been killed and two wounded in Nicaragua. The Associated Press sends us this from Managua and adds that there has been a skirmish between the marines and bandits. No further details of the fight have come across the cables yet. Evidently Sandino is up to his old tricks.

1 Here's a flash which states
2 that ~~xxxx~~ the boy kidnapped out in
3 St. Louis ^{last night} has returned home.

4 Well, St. Louis began the year
5 with one of the biggest manhunts ever
6 staged. Adolphus Busch Orthwein, the
7 thirteen year old great-grandson of the
8 famous brewer, Adolphus Busch, and
9 heir to a large part of the Busch
10 fortune, was kidnapped. The
11 International News Service tells us that
12 the family chauffeur was driving the
13 boy to a New Year's Eve dinner at his
14 grandfather's house. A negro with a
15 gun stopped the car, forced the chauffeur
16 to get out, and then drove away with the
17 boy. And immediately that manhunt got
18 under way.

19 Well, as I said, this late
20 dispatch states that the boy has returned
21 home unharmed. The St. Louis police
22 have not given out any further details.
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1 This afternoon as I was going
2 over the news dispatches, I sat back for
3 a minute and fell to thinking about the
4 year 1930. It was an important year
5 for me, especially these last three
6 months since I joined the Literary
7 Digest and have been dropping around
8 each evening with the day's news.

9 As I thought back over it there
10 was one ^{idea}~~thought~~ that overshadowed all
11 others. I got to thinking of the huge,
12 almost fabulous power of the radio,
13 with its well nigh incredible potentiality
14 for disseminating not only the news of
15 the day, but for spreading opinions,
16 ideas, reports, and rumors.

17 It reminds me of how important
18 are the things we say, the reports we
19 spread, and by this I do not mean simply
20 the words that wing through the ether,
21 the words spoken into the microphone.
22 I mean the things we tell each other,
23 and the rumors we pass along.

24 Just yesterday, in the office
25 of the Literary Digest, while I was

1 chatting with some of the editors, one
2 of them referred to the incalculable
3 harm that can be done by spreading false
4 rumors, especially at a time like the
5 present.

6 Then he mentioned a writer who
7 lived more than two hundred years ago, a
8 French Bishop who had some keen things
9 to say about the spreading of evil news.

10 My friend said he thought the
11 great French Bishop's words might well be
12 trumpeted far and wide, especially today.
13 Then he picked up a book and turned to
14 a page. The book contained the writings
15 of the brilliant Bishop Messillon. Said
16 the good bishop:-

17 "The tongue of the slanderer
18 is a devouring fire that tarnishes
19 whatever it touches. Wherever it passes
20 it leaves only desolation and ruin. It
21 turns into vile ashes what only a moment
22 before had appeared to us so precious and
23 brilliant. It is a disguised hatred which
24 sheds in its speeches the hidden venom
25 of the heart; a shameful levity which

RESOLUTIONS

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1 Well, I suppose you've all made
2 your New Year's resolutions and I'll bet
3 they're good ones. Probably a lot
4 better than mine. Yes, I've made a few.
5 ~~In fact this is the first time I ever~~
6 ~~did make any.~~ Here they are:

7 To begin with, I've resolved to
8 give you the news during the coming
9 months in as brief and pithy form as I
10 can, I mean the news that the International
11 News Service, Associated Press and United
12 Press send along to us.

13 Furthermore, I resolve to lay off
14 saying things on the air that make some
15 of you listeners write in and ^{razz}~~chide~~ me.

16 For instance, I resolve hereafter
17 to pronounce Antietam correctly. I
18 slipped on it one night, ^{and got about a thousand}
^{letters reminding me of my slip.}
19 I resolve never again to arouse
20 the wrath and fury of the boys down in
21 Amarillo, Texas, by saying that they are
22 any less adept at wearing tail coats,
23 striped trousers and spats than the Beau
24 Brummels of Park Avenue and Chicago's ^{swagger}
25 Bull Mich.

POEM

Last night I read you a New Year's poem sent in by a radio listener. And here's another one. In fact this one rather puzzled me when I first read it through. It came on a plain sheet of paper without any frills, and here's the way it goes:

Now who the dickens sent me this?

Sez you.

It's not painted and it's not embossed,

And mighty little did it cost;

The paper itself is pretty punk

The sentiment - a lot of bunk.

The whole affair's a piece of junk

Sez you

Well what the dickens eatin' you?

Sez I.

It ain't the pie crust turns the trick;

But is the filling thin or thick? Aye - that's the trick!

It ain't the paper so never mind it.

But it's the thought that lies behind it

So turn the darn thing round and find it.

Whereupon I turned the page around and on the back was written HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM BILL HOLLAND, of Ithaca, New York

Well, Bill Holland certainly figured out a neat and unusual way of sending New Year's greetings, and now I'm going to

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POEM - 2

follow suit by wishing you and Bill and everybody a glorious
and Happy New Year.

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.