

Indiana Daily Times

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HOW are your resolutions holding out?

HAVE YOU started figuring out your income tax?

BURCH wants to testify; lawyer won't let him—headline. More evidence of insanity?

SOMEBODY should tell Congress that the income tax is just as much of a nuisance as the soda tax was.

BILL HAYS is reported to be undecided whether to accept a \$100,000 job or keep a \$12,000 one. That doesn't sound like Bill.

AT LAST, Indianapolis bids fair to have one of those fifteen swimming pools that were promised three years in succession!

BEAR IN MIND the discovery of that California scientist that clocks run faster at night when the boss gives you a dirty look as you get down late.

IF THINGS keep on the new administration will have to appoint a squad of police assigned to the duty of pulling automobiles out of the river.

JUDGING FROM the photographs of "Terrible Tommy" O'Connor, those numerous persons who have been mistaken for him should not be bothered.

OF COURSE, the sanitary commission was not playing politics when, on the eve of its reorganization, it attempted to make long time contracts with its employees!

IT APPEARS that it is to be a real business administration. One day the city goes into the rental business and the next day it is proposed that it go into the insurance business.

An Unfair Advantage

The public service commission of Indiana began hearing the petition of the local telephone company for higher rates yesterday—just two days after the inauguration of a new mayor and corporation counsel in Indianapolis.

Opposed to the galaxy of attorneys and experts who were before the commission for the purpose of promoting the interests of the telephone company was Taylor Groninger, for two days corporation counsel.

It was up to Mr. Groninger to protect the interests of the people of Indianapolis and he was thrown into the case with no opportunity for preparation, with no assistance, and with no personal training for the work.

The result of this condition, which the commission should not have tolerated, is that the cause of the people of Indianapolis was presented under great handicap and the advantage of preparation and extensive expert services was accorded to the telephone company.

The greatest criticism of the public service commission today is that it affords a court where public utilities may present their pleas without meeting a proper opposition from the public.

Actions of the utilities are not, as a rule, organized. The municipalities have neither the funds nor the talent for the proper presentation of the case of the people. In the hearing now in progress the municipality has not even accorded the time for preparation of its case.

In this specific instance, it would appear that the public service commission has given a great advantage to the utility by holding its hearing at this particular time. But, overlooking that unfortunate circumstance, the fact remains that the people are almost invariably at a disadvantage when they appear before the commission through their municipal officers and they will continue to be at such a disadvantage until such time as they compel special provisions for legal work before the commission.

A Prank Too Many

The first Indianapolis woman whom Mayor Shank asked to be mayor for a day" in furtherance of his spectacular but mistaken program failed to serve.

And she told the mayor that she was not at all in sympathy with what she termed "making a joke out of the mayor's office."

This woman demonstrated considerably more acumen than did the mayor in asking her to take over his duties for a day.

The office of mayor of Indianapolis is a position of considerable responsibility and some dignity. Passing it about even for a day was ever contemplated by the statutes and was certainly not a part of the campaign platform of any candidate. This community understands, of course, that Mayor Shank's offer to allow women to act as mayor one day out of each week was merely one of the pranks that the mayor loves to play. The woman could not legally perform any of the mayor's functions and all that could possibly accrue to her would be the light of publicity in the reflection of which the mayor would be quite noticeable.

We are not prepared to say that this proposed diversion from the serious duties of governing this city would be "making a joke out of the office of mayor," but no one will deny that it tends in that direction and could easily be dispensed with at this particular time.

Mayor Shank ought to grant the greatest possible consideration to the women voters of Indianapolis who did so much toward placing him in office. His consideration should take a substantial form and the women should be permitted to participate to the fullest possible extent in the affairs of the municipality.

Making a woman "mayor for a day" is more in the nature of making a joke of the women of the city than anything else, and certainly nothing farther from Mayor Shank's desires than that.

Mr. Harding's Dog

President Harding is generally known as one of the kindest of men and his admirers not infrequently refer to his fondness for animals and his love of pets. That this is not a pose assumed after entering the White House is demonstrated by a tribute paid to a dog by Mr. Harding when he was editor of his Marion (Ohio) paper.

"It isn't orthodox to ascribe a soul to a dog—if soul means immortality," wrote the then editor of the Marion Star. "But Hub was loyal and loving, with the jealousy that tests its quality. He was reverent, silent, faithful; he was sympathetic, more than humanly so sometimes, or no lure could be devised to lure him from the sick bed of mistress master."

"He minded his own affairs, especially worthy of human emulation, and he would kill nor wound no living thing. He was modest and submissive where these were becoming, yet he assumed a guardianship of the home he sentinel until entry was properly vouchsafed. He couldn't speak our language, though he somehow understood, but he could, and was, eloquent with uttering eyes and wagging tail, and the other expressions of knowing dogs. No, perhaps he has no soul, but in these things are the essence of seal and the spirit of lovable life."

Proper Curtailment

The refusal of the board of safety longer to stand the expense of telephones in the homes of policemen and firemen marks the end of a time expediency that may have had merit at its inception, but is now sadly out of place.

When the practice was authorized it was announced that owing to low salaries paid by the city and the inability of the city to increase salaries at that time the payment for telephones should be regarded as a sort of bonus for good service. Since then salaries have been increased and the costs of living have been reduced. The bonus is no longer in order.

There are a few business houses in Indianapolis that pay for telephones in the homes of their employees, but the business houses nevertheless expect their employees to have telephones. Just why the city could afford special privileges to its employees is difficult to understand.

HOKUM AND CLAPTRAP ON MIRROR Not Necessary for Popular Success, Lasky States

"The splendid success being achieved by William De Mille's picture, 'Miss LuLu Bett,' is particularly gratifying because it is striking evidence that you do not have to play down to the American public," said Jesse L. Lasky, first vice president of the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, in a statement issued this week.

"Because some pictures, well acted and well produced have in the past gone to tremendous success," said Mr. Lasky, "a certain section of the industry has suddenly jumped to the conclusion that to be successful picture producers must stick to hokum and claptrap. I have no patience with this theory, as it has been demonstrated time and again that you cannot aim too high in purveying entertainment to the American exhibitors and American people."

"In producing 'Miss LuLu Bett' as a picture, we considered the powerful drama which lay in Zona Gale's story, but we also were guided by the tremendous popularity of her novel and her play. We saw immense possibilities in this story as a picture, and we were strengthened in our belief by the receipt of numerous letters from club women and other leaders of various communities expressing a pleasure that we had given them a chance to see 'Miss LuLu Bett' on the screen."

"The success of 'Miss LuLu Bett' is a three-day engagement at the Rivoli Theatre, New York, as well as at other big first-run theaters throughout the country prove we were justified in our high hopes for this picture. Hugo Riesenfeld, managing director of the Rivoli, told me he thought 'Miss LuLu Bett' was one of the best motion pictures he had seen in all the years he had been in the business. He wanted to book this picture day and date in the Rivoli and Rialto, but other bookings previously made prevented."

"Given the public without clamor and hubbub, 'Miss LuLu Bett' has proved one of the biggest box office pictures we have released. That it is possible to make a big box office success and at the same time make an artistic success is evidenced by the extremely laudatory reviews given 'Miss LuLu Bett' on its opening in New York."

"For instance, Alan Dale in the New York American called 'Miss LuLu Bett' a 'delightfully convincing picture,' and said that 'nobody who has assimilated Zona Gale's novel will hesitate to praise the new film. It is an exceedingly good picture made from an exceedingly good book.'

"Heywood Broun in the New York World said, 'William De Mille has done an excellent job in his production of Zona Gale's "Miss LuLu Bett." It is an excellent picture without lugs or dabbings and is worthy of your attention.'

"The New York Journal reviewer said: 'Here is a splendid picturization of a novel and a play, a proof that character analysis can be transferred from book to screen, from screen to book.'

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KELLY STOCK COMPANY TO BE AT BROADWAY

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EDWIN BULLINGER.

KAZAN, Dec. 15.—(By Mail)—A republican is dying of starvation. The prophecy did not come true last fall, but he was fulfilled with terrible completeness to day on the lonely frozen steppes of Eastern Russia. Fifty per cent of the babies in the Karzan republic already have died.

Forty-five per cent of the population of this village in this region are dead or "missing."

Not six per cent of the population of the republic will be left to greet the spring. Karzan contained a population of over two million when the last census was taken.

I have just returned from a trip through the frozen deserts in Eastern Russia with J. R. Childs of the American Relief. We conducted the first investigation since the winter set in of the villagers in the heart of the stricken region.

ALL IN VILLAGE OF 200 INHABITANTS DIED.

In one settlement the last four inhabitants died the day before we arrived—a village of 200 inhabitants had reverted to primal nothingness with no one to bury the last four bodies.

On the first stretch of our long journey into the frozen wastes of the snow bound steppes of Siberia we traveled without finding a single village where any food, save grass could be bought at any price.

Eighty per cent of the people left alive in this district are maintaining life solely on a diet of grass. Some of the peasants grind grass and roots into "flour" which they sell at 130,000 rubles a pound. Throughout the steppes there are a number of East European grain growing centers, there grows today only the cold bush of death.

A bleak northern sun squints down for a few hours each day on endless snow fields where the only thing is fine, swirling snow, lifted by the biting winds and dropped in a lavender mist upon the silent white plains.

WEEDS AND GRASS GROUND INTO MAKESHIFT FLOUR.

Our sleigh caravan jingled into an almost deserted village. An old peasant woman with a face like that of a skeleton, hobbled forward. In her bony hands she clutched a handful of weeds and grass and in a voice so weak and nearly dead she could not be audible, she told how she ground them into a makeshift flour, samples of which looked and smelled like chaff from a threshing machine.

In her hut, she mixed this with water and produced a brackish mess which looked like bran mangle.

She can live on this for a few weeks more, she said, "but the children are dead."

Through the empty streets we passed rows of silent cabins snow banked. Our sleighs jingled jingly; there were no dogs, no children. Only the awful silence.

In some of the cabins I found families lying motionless—conserving their

energy, prolonging a hopeless existence, dozing away in death. Too weak to eat, they must freeze to death if starvation has not already claimed them when their supply of wood is gone.

Extinction of life already has reached an advanced stage in the little villages of the interior where tiny settlements are returning to their state of emptiness of four hundred years ago.

Ninety-eight villages we visited. In fifteen, the inhabitants were eating the last of their dogs. Livestock has practically disappeared, yet when these people killed and ate their horses, they cut off their only means of transporting food. When the last of the horses is dead, the doom of all living things in Kazan is sealed.—Copyright, 1922, by United Press.

son whose scent is the same as that of the articles which it believes was the cause of his agony.

If a snake or crocodile kills a native some sorcerer is certain to start a report that the killing had been inspired by him. It is merely a hint that the sorcerer has decimal the death of a person is sufficient to cause that person to die from sheer fright.

There is a widespread belief among the natives that sorcerers can talk with crocodiles and snakes, which annually cause many fatalities in Papua. Snakes, in fact, sometimes are employed by the sorcerer. He takes a piece of cloth or other article upon which the scent of the person he wishes to kill and puts it in a pan with a snake. Under the pan he kindles a fire. The tortured snake associates suffering with the scent, and when it disappears the person who might be called a patient sorcery. In that some of the old men

were done to his garden. The relatives are hidden in the surrounding bush and shell or some other equally worthless rubbish and over it he speaks mysterious words. Then he sends his "client" away. No sorcerer does any killing himself. But life is held so cheaply in New Guinea that usually he finds it is easy to hire some one to administer the poison for him.

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