

The Indianapolis Times

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No law shall be passed restraining the free interchange of thought and opinion, or restricting the right to speak, write, or print freely, on any subject whatever.—Constitution of Indiana.

THE ITALIAN DEBT

The Senate's ratification of the Italian debt settlement was merely the triumph of ordinary common sense.

"Our settlement," said Senator Smoot, "represents the very last penny we can get from her." And no doubt he spoke the truth.

Senators, seeking to make political capital by opposing the settlement, talked pompously of standing by the American people—as if American taxpayers are not better off for accepting as much on the dollar as a debtor can pay—while others objected on the ground that Dictator Mussolini of Italy is a dangerous character. When you start collecting a debt the debtor's capacity to pay, not his social standing nor whether he is cruel to animals, is the thing that counts.

Thus, if Secretary Mellon, Herbert Hoover, Senator Smoot and the rest of the debt commission, give us their word that this is the best we can do, we would be foolish to cut off our noses to spite our faces by turning the settlement down.

There is, however, one very grave fault to be found with the settlement—a fault, moreover, that is common to all the negotiations thus far conducted. Senator Robinson of Arkansas put his finger on the flaw when he complained that while we have consistently written off anywhere from a fourth to three-quarters of the war debt due us, we are getting no credit for our openhandedness.

In fact, the debt question has been handled in a way, the Senator charges, that completely "sacrifices our reputation throughout the world for generosity and liberality."

Which is only too true. One by one, as the debtor nations have come forward, we have made sweeping reductions in our bills. In fact, we are letting them pay what they are perfectly able to pay and forgiving the rest.

In the case of Italy, for example, we made her a present of approximately 74 cents out of every dollar she owes us, yet the impression continues to grow throughout Europe that Uncle Sam is a tight-fisted, penny nursing old Shylock gloating as he wrings the last copper from weak and starving nations that owe him money.

This reputation is highly injurious to us as a Nation and is totally unwarranted, and it constitutes an everlasting reproach to our diplomats and statesmen who have not seen how to put a stop to the slander—let alone turn the situation to our advantage, as European statesmen would certainly have done had the shoe been on the other foot.

GETTING OFF LIGHT

Secretary of State Kellogg, we are told, has proposed to Chile and Peru that they both give up their claims to Tacna and Arica and let Bolivia take them over as an outlet for her on the Pacific; either that or make them into a neutral territory or buffer state—a South American Belgium.

The idea, Secretary Kellogg himself is quoted as saying, has been received "in such a way as to lead him to believe it might prove acceptable."

This sounds almost too good to be true. Not in a hundred years has American diplomacy made such a miserable showing as in the handling of this dispute between Chile and Peru or injured our national prestige more.

In the first place we rushed in where diplomatic demigods had not dared tread for forty years. We accepted to become sole arbiters in a family row impossible of settlement in a way to please both the principals and their kin—the rest of Latin America. It was a situation all cut out for a Pan-American commission to handle—not us alone.

Blunder No. 2 was the award of the President who, as sole arbitrator, ordered a plebiscite. Chile, having licked Peru in 1880, ever since had governed the invaded territory as her own; thus the idea of an election in Tacna and Arica to determine sovereignty was about like having Texas and California vote today on whether they will remain in the United States or revert to Mexico.

Rioting in the disputed territory, bitter wrangling inside the plebiscitary commission itself—the half of which, incidentally, has never been told in this country—General Pershing's dismal failure as the head of that commission, and his return home from an impossible job, are now all ancient history.

These things, and more, however, seem to have had their effect on Washington. Some glimmer of the truth patently has pierced the fog which, of late, has so isolated State Department thought from the rest of the world.

Just how it happened, or when, is not certain, but one thing at least, is clear. The ill-advised plebiscite plan at some stage of the game or other was lured into a remote, secret and sound-proof room of the department and gently done to death.

Subsequently—still a bit shaky but trying hard not to show it—the conspirators informed a waiting world that Secretary Kellogg had "tendered his good offices" to Chile and Peru and had them accepted. It was done so naively that an innocent bystander could never have guessed a plebiscite plan had ever been born—still less that its birth had been announced by the blast of many bugles.

Latin America giggled and Europe laughed up her sleeve. After such a pompous start to settle the whole business all by itself, without aid from anybody, either the World Court, or the League of Nations, or even from any of our own sister republics on this side of the Atlantic, Washington's embarrassments gave them much joy.

There's more to the sad story but we won't prolong the agony. Besides we are not yet out of the woods. Let's hope, however, with all our hearts that the buffer-state idea takes, and thus provides us with a way out.

EXECUTING A BOY

The State of Indiana will send a boy of 16 to the electric chair in August.

That is the sentence of the court for a murder, cold-blooded and heartless.

It is true that this boy is a Negro, that he was not defended by a high-class lawyer, that there was no effort to discover what sort of insanity existed in his great-grand aunt, that no probe was made to discover whether he showed an inclination to kill

World Will Never Know What a Wire Walker Goes Through to Perfect Art

By Walter D. Hickman

There is more to this wire walking game than most of us who sit out in front of a stage even suspect.

The other afternoon when the matinees was over at Keith's I had the chance to be in the theater.

With his wire stretched near the stage on two chairs, Walter Powell, featured wire walker with the Kelly La Tell Company, was practicing some of the most difficult stunts known to wire walkers.

The very stunts that he does twice a day on the Keith circuit. The other night at Keith's he slipped on the wire and "burned" his side and arms badly. He did not give up, but went through the stunt again to perfection.

But to convince himself that he could not slip again, Powell practices these difficult stunts an hour after each performance.

He wants perfection. The only way to do it is to practice these wire stunts time and time again. It means real work and even exhaustion for this young red headed wire expert. The audiences and the experts consider him one of the very best in the business.

When other people are resting in bed, while others are on the golf links or having a party and good eats, Walter Powell is busy on the stage perfecting his art.

In his private life he has a regular series of things not to do. He has sacrificed everything for his art, just like a classical dancer.

So when you see a wire walker do a difficult stunt with ease I ask you to realize that his artistry is the result of years, hours and hours of practice.

His feet become mighty tired and sore. His limbs ache and his body becomes bruised, but Walter Powell never gives up.

And he knows that perfection will keep him from breaking his neck.

While Powell was rehearsing Jack Russell, pianist for Boyd Senter, the genius on many a musical instrument, was at the piano.

Russell finds it necessary to practice to keep his fingers in trim. His fingers must never become stiff, so he has to practice when an audience is not in the theater.

You may see Jack Russell and Walter Powell at Keith's this week.

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NEW SHOW OPENS TODAY AT PALACE

A large act that has been compared with the smartest of French revues is the Braille and Pallo revue which offers "A Parisian Diversion" at the Palace theater the last half of this week, according to an announcement made today.

Others may even inquire as to what has become of family influence and restraint that could not curb these murderous tendencies in one so young.

Can it be possible that we in our rush for riches and wealth, are losing something out of American life that is vastly more important?

If our schools, our churches and our homes are failing, if we must turn back the clock for three centuries to preserve life and property, we should recognize that fact.

Sending a 16-year-old boy to an electric chair is not the most pleasant spectacle for an August morning.

THE SENSE OF HONOR

A Pittsburgh prohibition commissioner publicly appeals to students of Carnegie Institute to spy upon each other and report Volstead act violations.

A Cincinnati Anti-Saloon League official urges women to spy upon their neighbors. "The nosier, the better," he says.

It was to be expected that such procedure, recounted at the prohibition hearing in Washington, should be repudiated by Gen. Lincoln Andrews, Federal chief of enforcement. General Andrews, after all, is a gentleman.

"I am so far removed from that kind of thing that to me it is a joke.

But the thing is not a joke. It is so far removed from anything comical that Dr. Samuel Harden Church, president of Carnegie Institute, put aside his academic interests and journeyed to Washington to voice his personal protest.

"It tends to destroy the sense of honor of our students," he said.

There is a philosophy in those words that this Nation should begin studying before it is forever too late.

If prohibition enforcement rots the honor of youth it will destroy the one thing upon which any moral order must ultimately depend. A nation without honor is a Nation lost.

PAID INFORMERS

By Mrs. Walter Ferguson

The news that hundreds of women are acting as informers for the dry forces has recently been sent out from Washington. The story goes that many women in all parts of the country are working for the enforcement of prohibition.

This is not news of a startling or dangerous nature. Women always have been in the front ranks in the fight for prohibition. That they should go on working at this is not strange.

But when we are told that, while they are not hired as dry officers because they are not considered adapted to this work, they are registered as voluntary workers and are paid by the Government for their time in apprehending lawbreakers, that is quite another matter.

This thing savors of shame. It is humiliating to think that a few women who will stoop to sell themselves for spies in so doing involve in their disgrace all of the sincere and high-minded women who wish to see the Volstead law enforced in an honorable manner.

The rural districts and the cities are filled with women who are intensely interested in this agitation. The W. C. T. U., which has contributed more than any one force to the enactment of this prohibition law, has as members those who are naturally anxious that it shall never be repealed or modified.

I feel safe in saying, however, that this great organization would never tolerate the idea of a single one of its members taking pay for spying on those who have liquor. To do such work through zeal for a cause may be all right, but to do it for money is a shameful prostitution of ideals.

Women, like men, will sell their information for gold, who will stoop to spy on their fellow citizens, must belong to a low order of individual. That our Government, which always has shown an aptitude for employing only those who are honest and above suspicion, which is such a tickler for uprightness that it will prosecute a poor mail clerk for taking a few stalks of rhubarb from a crate, will hire men and women of such a type, is fit evidence that there is something wrong somewhere.

The testimonies of any paid informer has never been looked upon very highly by Americans. We have always hated spies, and we shall continue to do so.

He Sings



MR. FIXIT

Property Owners Must Finance Paving of City Streets.

Let Mr. Fixit present your case to city officials. He is The Times representative at the city hall. Write him at The Times.

Street paving is exceedingly desirable, but it costs money. The city cannot pay; the property owners must finance this improvement that raises the value of their holdings.

DEAR MR. FIXIT: I am wondering why we can't have the streets paved west of Sheffield Ave. N. Mount and Tremont Sts. are a fright, and Belleview Pl. as well. If the property owners are not progressive, let the city do it.

WEST SIDE RESIDENT.

The city does not finance street paving. Property owners must pay for it. Of course, improvements should be encouraged.

TO TIMES READERS: The board of health will investigate the situation on Wisconsin St.

A Sermon for Today

By Rev. John R. Gunn

Text: "The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea." Hosea 1:1.

Hosea was a great preacher. The one thing that especially impresses me about him was the passion of soul with which he delivered his message. He delivered his message as though each sentence burst with a groan from his soul.

It seems to me that this heart-burdened earnestness is lacking in our modern ministry. In fact, the modern ideal for the minister seems to demand that he shall be care-free and light-hearted, jubilantly buoyant and full of pep. In these days we talk so much about pep, and we are so disposed to gauge men by the pep they display that nearly every one who tries to make a good impression desires to be classed as "peppy." "Make it snappy and peppy." That is the ideal. Preachers have been affected by it, and too many of us have made this our ideal. But what else could be expected? That is just what most of the churches are demanding of the preacher. "We want a preacher with snap and pep." That is what you hear everywhere. Naturally, the preachers try to meet this demand. And so a condition has arisen where pep is sought at the expense of serious and sober thought. Consequently we frequently witness a great display of pep with nothing much back of it. One may be full of pep, but if his efforts are not directed by thought, if there is no heart and soul and high purpose back of it, all the pep upon which he prides himself does not amount to much.

What we need is not a peppy ministry, but a pungent ministry; not merely a display of physical pep, but a display of soul power and heart earnestness; not mere human energy, but divine unction. In this respect Hosea was an ideal preacher. When he preached men knew that he had a divine message, and they knew that his whole being was all afire with that message. To my mind he represents the type of preacher we need today. In this great hour of the world we need in our pulpits men with a God-given message and with a God-inspired earnestness. If the preacher today would fulfill his solemn mission to the world, he must realize that he is on serious business; that he is sent from God with a message of life and death to a lost world; that message must become a mighty passion in his soul, and he must feel upon his heart the weight of the world's sin and woe.

That must be discouraging to the old Hoosier radical. He's all dressed up as a martyr and no place to go. Not much pleasure in posing as a victim of a cruel and rapacious, plutocratic government when no one is looking. Radicalism can stand anything but public indifference.

MOVIES AND CIVILIZATION

Carl E. Milliken, former Governor of Maine, told Indiana Indorsers of Photoplays, in convention at Ft. Wayne the other day, that movies are the world's greatest implements against future wars and strife. They are a great civilizing influence.

At the same meeting Miss Mabel Osgood, primary supervisor of Ft. Wayne schools, called the moving

RIGHT HERE IN INDIANA

By GAYLORD NELSON

THIRTY-FIVE CENTS AND THE CHAIR

Waite McCutcheon, 16-year-old Negro lad of Indianapolis, was found guilty of murder by a Marion County jury Wednesday. The verdict carries the penalty of death in the electric chair.

The boy, after holding up a man who had only 35 cents in his pocket, shot and killed him. For 35 cents he faces the chair. Not such a nice crime career.

No doubt, as long as our criminal code provides capital punishment as the penalty for murder, this youth, despite his age, deserves the chair. He was guilty of a plain, cold-blooded murder committed without any extenuating circumstances. Even his lawyer, the pauper attorney, could make only the most perfunctory defense.

But if he had had influential friends, and money to hire a troop of shrewd criminal lawyers, would his trial have lasted only a day and ended in a verdict of the chair? Not exactly. The jury wouldn't be picked yet. How many Marion County murderers paid for the crime in the electric chair last year?

Just one, out of eighteen convicted murderers. And that an ignorant, illiterate Negro killer without friends.

Not much can be said in favor of capital punishment when it is inflicted on a dull, ignorant colored boy and one Negro man, while 90 per cent of our killers go free, suffer nothing more severe than imprisonment with the prospects of a sympathetic pardon board shortening that.

NO CROWN OF MARTYRDOM

Eugene V. Debs, Terre Haute Socialist, ex-boader at the Federal penitentiary at Atlanta, where he matriculated for anti-war activities, will be denied the crown of martyrdom for which he aches as a result of his loss of citizenship rights.

When the veteran agitator went to Bermuda a few weeks ago for a vacation, it was announced with all the tremolo stops pulled out that he was apprehensive he would not be allowed to re-enter the United States. The Government was persecuting him, shouted his friends in and out of Congress. He was pictured as man without a country—a poor, persecuted Philip Nolan. They started a movement for restoration of his citizenship rights.

Now comes Albert Johnson, chairman of the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, and rudely snatches the martyr's crown away from Debs' brow.

Debs can re-enter the United States whenever he wishes, says Johnson.

"As a matter of fact," points out Johnson, "Debs has not lost his citizenship. It is possible under the conditions of his