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"Give Light and the People Will Find Their Own Way."—Dante.

The President and Latin America

"One thousand marines to Nicaragua," so reads a headline.

Heartbreaking enough it would be at any time, from whatever angle you view it, the fighting in Nicaragua at this particular moment becomes a doubly regrettable tragedy.

Just one week from next Monday, Jan. 16, at Havana, Cuba, the republics of the western world will meet in a sixth Pan-American congress to discuss their relations with one another—the United States, Mexico, the countries of Central and South America and the Caribbean Sea.

Even now President Coolidge is at work on the speech which he intends to deliver at the opening of this highly important conference. There, it is understood, he will stress our good intentions toward our weaker neighbors to the south in a thoroughly sincere effort to stem the tide of fear and suspicion now on the rise against us.

And, but for the case of Nicaragua, the President would doubtless be able to return from Havana with the feeling that the prospect was never brighter for a real and sympathetic understanding between the United States and Latin America. His recent personal efforts in this direction have not been lost on the people of the part of the world. They were quick to sense his relegation of the blundering Secretary of State Kellogg to a back seat and his apparent determination to take a hand in Latin American affairs himself. His quick acceptance of the resignation of the inept Ambassador Shefield; his appointment of the human and capable Dwight Morrow to Mexico in Shefield's place followed by Lindbergh's good-will flight; his selection of an all-star delegation to represent the United States at Havana; and his decision to rupture all presidential precedent and journey to Cuba in person to make the opening address, all and singly meant to Latin Americans that the American President is frankly, almost eagerly, holding out his hand in friendship.

Now bloody fighting has broken out in Nicaragua. Heavy reinforcements will be pouring into that tiny republic at the very moment the President rises to speak at Havana. Nor will any flow of defensive oratory or printer's ink, however abundant, serve to improve the situation for him down there. It isn't what we think that matters, but what Latin Americans think and they are already bitterly hostile to suspicious of, and alarmed by, what they regard as the encroachments of "the colossus of the north."

The disagreeable truth is that through its amazing ignorance of Latin American temperament, Secretary of State Kellogg has put both the American people and their President in a very nasty hole. Retaliatory slaughter of more Nicaraguans will surely give rise to a new storm of resentment against us throughout Latin America, while just as certainly withdrawal under fire would send our prestige down to the vanishing point the world over. We lose no matter what we do.

And so it comes about that President Coolidge's praiseworthy efforts to save what little Secretary Kellogg left of the situation may be nullified by the belated but, inevitable consequences of this same mangy folly.

For what can it matter how sincere President Coolidge and our distinguished array of delegates may be at Havana if their Latin American audience listens to their words with one eye on Nicaragua and its tongue in its cheek?

Politics and Broadcasting

If you are a radio listener, you will be interested in open hearings before the Interstate Commerce Committee of the Senate next week on the confirmation of two of the new members of the Federal radio commission.

These hearings indicate a dissatisfaction in some quarters with the activities of the commission during the first ten months of its existence.

The task of the commission was to relieve the jam in the ether, which had progressed to such a point that satisfactory reception was next to impossible. More than 800 stations were in the air, using eighty-nine wave lengths, of which fifty were most desirable.

The commission set about reallocating wave lengths, and readjusting power assignments, under the mandate of Congress to grant broadcasting licenses "in the public interest, necessity, or convenience." A hundred stations were crowded off the air, the power of many was reduced, and scores received less desirable wave channels. The number of stations must be still further reduced.

There has been a natural outcry from those stations which have been forced to abandon privileges which they acquired during the era of unregulated broadcasting. Appeals were made to members of Congress to use their influence to obtain better treatment.

It is not evident to what extent these complaints have been a factor in causing dissatisfaction in Congress.

Nor is it clear whether the charge, sometimes made, that the big companies have been unduly favored, can be substantiated.

It is certain, however, that politics should play no part in the issuance of broadcasting licenses. The privilege of using the air should not be traded for votes, and the radio commission should be free to act without political pressure. It must not become the political agency of the dominant party, or of any clique of leaders on Capitol Hill.

Congress in enacting radio legislation, and in passing on the fitness of members of the commission, should keep in mind its own words—"public interest, convenience, or necessity."

Mass Distribution

Mass production having brought America to new heights of prosperity, mass distribution will be adopted next, says Edward A. Filene, millionaire Boston merchant.

Mr. Filene amplifies his remarks by saying that this means great chain department stores, similar to chain grocery stores and chain notion stores such as now exist.

He asserts that a big department store chain could effect such huge economies in buying and in organization that it could make enormous profits and at the same time could sell goods more cheaply than is possible to any individual store.

It would take a skilled business observer to discuss Mr. Filene's prophecy intelligently. It is interesting at all events; one imagines that it will engage the attention of a number of people in the near future.

Teaching Europe About Us

Americans should stop worrying about foreign propaganda in this country and should concentrate on spreading a little American propaganda in Europe, according to Dr. J. C. Bay, Chicago librarian, in a speech before the American Library Institute.

Europe as a whole knows nothing about us and cares nothing, says Dr. Bay. A scholar searching the average European library for material on the United States finds very little.

All of this is interesting. Our European critics love to speak of our provincialism and our lack of general knowledge. Yet, in the face of the fact that Europe is steadily slipping into second place, behind America, in the march of the world's affairs; in the face of the fact that the old world has passed its zenith while the new world is just reaching its manhood—Europe is too provincial even to stock its libraries with a few books about this country.

Europe, as a result, continues to misunderstand us lamentably. This is usually spoken of as a situation that we will regret some day; but it may be that it will be Europe that will regret it.

Peddlers

If Mrs. Ethelreda Lewis of Johannesburg, had not stopped to talk one day with a peddler, there would have been no "Trader Horn," a book which has been one of the most significant successes of a decade.

Those folk who are alarmed when they confront the necessity of communing for a few minutes with an alien soul miss many fine experiences and fail to hear many a brave tale.

It has become the custom to turn the cold shoulder upon vendors of goods who come to one's front door. There are many arguments as to why they should be discouraged, if it is true; one's loyalty to home town merchants, for instance, or one's lack of time, or one's disinclination to buy the things they have to sell. For every housewife knows that some of them are veritable pests. But then, some are not. A few are extremely interesting individuals. You'd be surprised what a knowledge of life they carry about with them.

These peddlers who walk patiently from house to house with books, beauty creams, floor mops, furniture polish or saucepans are so accustomed to front doors slammed in their faces that they will often expand like a rose in the sun if you will lend them an ear now and then.

They will tell you, perchance, about their children, or about the disease that carried off a husband, of some pet ambition which they cherish to make their days more endurable, of some tragic misfortune, as poignant as any snappy story.

Mrs. Lewis, who did not want a new gridiron but whose attention was arrested by the lovable wrinkled face of the old man who came selling them, derived from him a narrative that comes straight out of the heart of mysterious Africa, a tale that enthralls and fascinates, a story, moreover, that has had one of the largest sales of any recent publication in America.

All of us may not be able to guess such characters as Trader Horn, but you may be sure that we often ignore the opportunity to gain some contacts with men and women who may not belong to our clubs, but who are more interesting and vital and splendid and brave than many who do.

Poor Britain

It is rather hard on the British. Now their weather has been Americanized. Snow, heavy snow, great drifts of snow like those on our western plains after a blizzard, have tied up the British Isles until airplanes have had to be used to carry food to shut-in villages, and war tractors have had to be turned loose on the roads. And worse, the guests of the Hunts-Ball have had to detour for miles to avoid choked roads.

For some time there has been a very general complaint of the "Americanizing" of industry. Speeding up, application of modern machinery, cutting down of workers, efficiency engineering—all that terrible Yankee stuff. But the weather was regarded as something sacred, something traditional, something which had to conform to precedent and happen more or less as outlined in the calendar. But here is Dakota weather alongside the gulf stream.

Whether, as Herbert Janvin Brown claims, it is the influence of sun-spots and long neglected ocean movements, or is a bi-product of the World War, or just another of the things to be attributed to Moscow, time only will tell. But suspicion points to the growing influence of America in the meteorological as well as industrial world.

Killing Off the Aged

Alex Jourdan, a Chippewa Indian, goes on trial in Minnesota shortly for the murder of his mother-in-law.

To this charge Jourdan has raised a unique defense. He says he killed the old woman, who was 90, blind and helpless, in accordance with ancient tribal customs, fulfilling his duty as a good son-in-law.

It is explained that the Indians felt that an extremely aged person, too enfeebled to enjoy life, and utterly dependent on others, should be killed in order to hasten his or her journey to the Happy Hunting Grounds, where more happiness could be found than on earth.

Before you condemn this philosophy too severely, remember that an American jury not so long ago refused to convict an educated white man who killed his invalid daughter to end her suffering. Once in a while, tragically enough, a case does arise where it seems better for a person to die than to live. It is the same in civilized white America as it was among the ancient Indians.

We often wonder why they are called the secrets of success. Everybody is always telling them to everybody else.

Money talks, perhaps, but pa says his doesn't make any more noise than a jew's-harp in a symphony orchestra.

Always be careful what you call a truck driver when he crowds you off the road. You may miss your calling.

A magician is not the only one who produces things you never saw before. Look at what the laundress brings back.

Another thing the world needs is week-ends that last till about Wednesday.

M. E. TRACY

SAYS:

"Success Seldom Comes Without Hard Work, Perseverance, and, Above All Else, a Definite Object in Life."

Stirred by the longest casualty list yet received from Nicaragua, Washington orders another thousand marines to embark.

This hardly can be for the purpose of repressing revolution, since we have Washington's word for it that all revolution and that this man Sandino who continues to make life miserable for President Diaz and the "Devil Dogs" is nothing but a "bandit."

What a disappointment President Diaz must be to Washington! Not only was he unable to cope with a political uprising, but now he is unable to cope with common banditry.

One cannot help wondering just what Washington saw in the fellow to warrant recognizing him in the first place.

What's Big Idea?

Putting that question aside and admitting that Sandino is a bandit, as the State and Navy departments continually have asserted, what is the big idea?

Justifiable as it may have been to undertake the political pacification of Nicaragua, does that involve policing the country against common criminals?

Or are the State and Navy departments wrong, and is this man Sandino something more than a common criminal, something more than the "bandit" he has been described, something more than an outlaw preying on the community because he can think of nothing better to do?

Sandino 'Crushed' Once

It was on the last July 17 that our marines first came into violent contact with Sandino.

On that occasion, and after that was reported as a very severe engagement, they were supposed to have completely crushed him.

Three hundred of his followers were killed, and he was represented as fleeing to the hills with only a few stragglers.

An admiral and a brigadier general declared that he was "through."

Since then our marines have come into collision with him several times, but with such uniform success as to leave the impression that he had not and could not become more than a nuisance.

Last week's battle, with six dead and twenty-eight wounded, will force not only the public, but the State and Navy Departments to re-visit their opinions.

Bad Boy Gone Right

One hears so much about good boys gone wrong that it is refreshing to hear of a bad one gone right.

Not that "Bossy" Gillis was such an awfully bad boy, but that Newburyport got to thinking of him as such and that his election as mayor of the staid old Puritan town stands forth in spectacular contrast to what might have been expected.

Not only the general character of his previous career, but the circumstances immediately preceding his rise in politics was such as to make the incident highly dramatic.

Blood in His Eye

Bad or not, "Bossy" Gillis had no idea of going into politics, much less running for mayor, until he found himself serving a two months' term in jail last summer as the result of a beating which he gave the then mayor of Newburyport when the latter refused him a permit to run a filling station.

"I went to see the mayor about it," says Gillis, "and the interview ended by my bouncing my fist off his mug."

The court thought such undignified conduct was worth about sixty days, and Mr. Gillis, though he might have disagreed, was obliged to defer to the court's judgment.

Instead of repenting, with two months to think it over, he only got mad, and came out with blood in his eye.

Plastering the town with circus posters and filling his yard with tombstones dedicated to the memory of those he intended to run out of office, he began such a campaign as Newburyport never saw before and never expects to see again, carrying every ward except one.

Many Oaths of Office

He took the oath of office Monday morning, and as one reporter declares, "It was only the first of many oaths with which he announced his program."

"All right, you birds," he roared by way of an inaugural address, "listen hard and go out and tell your friends, the visitors, where the fire will fall. It will fall on the fire chief, the solicitor, assessor, superintendent of highways, board of health's head, city messenger, overseer of the poor, building inspector, harbor master, tree warden, superintendent of parks, caretaker of the city clocks, superintendent of gypsies and brown-tail moth extermination, registrar of voters, library director and sealer of weights and measures."

Considering that Newburyport is a city of only 15,000 people, that about completes the list.

Work Hard for Success

Born on an Illinois farm and obliged to work her way up in the world against many handicaps, Lila Fuller danced herself into the heart of all Europe. When she died in Paris last Monday, the great French journals gave her columns of unprinted praise.

Mrs. Frank Surlis of Cherokee, Iowa, has won almost as great distinction by baking pies.

No matter where you come from, or what your disadvantages, you can always succeed by doing something a little better than anyone else.

Supremacy in any field means success, but supremacy seldom comes without hard work, perseverance, and, above all else, a definite object in life.

Next! Now, Who's Next?



THE STORY OF CIVILIZATION

Alexander—The Napoleon of Antiquity

Written for The Times by Will Durant

served him—Clitus whom later he would kill.

LEXANDER marched on now

with an army of 35,000 men—nearly enough to keep an American city dry.

He came upon Darius at Issus (334 B. C.) and defeated him so completely that the aged king sued humbly for peace, offering all Asia west of the Euphrates to Macedonia.

Alexander, however, was not moved by such a gesture, and he accepted the offer.

Alexander's soldiers implored him to accept, but he would not; nor would he be moved by the king's tears, saying there would be nothing left to do.

Courage is a great virtue, but without intelligence it is nothing.

Alexander marched on, devouring cities every day. After a remarkable siege he captured Tyre (332 B. C.), leaving the Persian fleet havenless.

Then he passed down and overran Egypt, allured, as Caesar was to be, by the glamor of that ancient land, but clear-headed enough to select an admirable site for the great city that was to bear his name and give it its own to the ensuing age.

Turning back to the northeast he marched straight into Persia, defeated Darius again (at Arbela, 331 B. C.) and showed his generosity by honoring the memory