



# The Indianapolis Times

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"Give Light and the People Will Find Their Own Way"

## A Continuous Burden

Announcement that the state highway commission will add 2,000 miles to the state road system is fine. But the announcement also means that each and every year there will be an added burden for the care and maintenance of roads and that little has been done toward obtaining a permanent type of road that will, at some future time, relieve the citizens of the costly burden.

The condition of many roads during the past summer, with detours in such condition as to cost the owners of automobiles hundreds of thousands of dollars in repairs, is ample proof of the transient type of the roads that are being built.

A very few years see the finish of the ordinary road and after that comes a new bill for repairs, a bill paid by gasoline tax that is as much a tax as though paid through the office of the treasurer.

The people are now paying approximately twenty millions of dollars each year for good roads. These roads are more than desirable. They are economical when the saving in the life of the ordinary car is considered.

But there should be a time when this burden can be lifted and the present commission has apparently neither the vision nor the desire to tackle this part of the problem.

This is shown by the nonchalance with which it purchases a few millions of dollars' worth of cement each year and is compelled by public sentiment or fears to hand the contracts to the lowest bidders.

Perhaps the cement road is the answer. If it is the answer, then the state, if it is to be a continual purchaser, should manufacture its own cement.

The state has the raw materials. It has, may it be suggested, the labor in the shape of a continually increasing number of idle prisoners in the state prisons. The saving of a million dollars or more each year by state owned and state manufactured cement for state highways would do something to relieve the taxation burdens against which the farmers of the state are protesting so vigorously.

It may be too much to ask of state commissions that are more powerful than all the rest of the state government and with more money to spend than all the rest of the state officials.

But some day there may come a commission with enough courage to recognize the fact that the way to increase prosperity is to place as small a tax as possible on industry and enterprise. One way of doing it is to put that twenty millions of road money into a permanent form and spend it with as much care as the seasonal workers spend their meager wages.

## Shadow-Boxing With Religious Ghosts

Some years ago a distinguished professor at Columbia university defined a theologian as a "blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat which isn't there."

This is doubtless an over-harsh estimate of theology and its place in religious life. Theology, as man's intellectual interpretation of the nature and meaning of religious experience and activity, has a permanent and enduring place in religion, even though its province may be handed over more and more to social scientists.

But squabbles over relatively petty matters of belief and ritual inevitably bring religion into disrepute with up-to-date minds. Moreover, they dissipate the energy which churchmen should be devoting to advancing the cause of justice, truth, beauty and happiness in the every-day life of man.

Such is the underlying issue brought to the fore in the current quarrel between Bishop Manning and the participants in the New York meeting of the Christian Unity League. Coming together to promote accord among Protestant Christians, they provoked vivid discussion over delicate technicalities in the administration of the communion service.

Many friends of a dynamic social religion will wonder why church leaders today are greatly concerned with respect to communion rites. A generation ago Dr. Hatch and others pointed out the derivation of the rites of communion and the mass from the Greek mystery religions. At the same time, Conybear, Shotwell and Goetz were demonstrating that St. Paul instituted the sacrament of the mass to compete successfully with the Greek cults among which he was proselytizing.

Percy Gardner, Alfred Loly, Bishop Barnes of Birmingham, and others have made it clear that we must seek the origins and meaning of the sacraments, including the mass and the Protestant communion service, in anthropology rather than through a study of formal systematic theology.

In short, in strictly contemporaneous religious discussion a controversy over the niceties of communion ritual and etiquette is comparable to animated controversy in regard to varying interpretations of how God dictated the Bible to Moses.

Yet churchmen allow themselves to be drawn into a warm dispute over the communion service, without for a moment bringing up the crucial question of why it should longer be a matter of deep concern to any but a fundamentalist.

The meeting of the Unity league would have produced more confidence and interest among skeptical but friendly observers if the sessions had been devoted to the place and function of the church in the modern urban and industrial age.

Gaston (N. C.) as a symbol is more cogent an issue than the Eucharist and the Protestant modifications in its celebration. Instead of battling over ritualistic communion rooted in antique beliefs, why did not the leaders carry on an earnest sociological

## M. E. Tracy SAYS:

*It Is Only a Blind Mistaken Faith That Rapid Transit Will Relieve the Congestion in Our Cities.*

REMEMBER when the "balloon ascension and parachute descent" was the big thrill at county fairs and circuses?

How far away it all seems, with couples dropping half a mile to give the wedding ceremony a kick.

We used to believe that human beings couldn't fall more than a few hundred feet without losing consciousness.

We would believe it still if some good sport hadn't proved us wrong.

Progress owes a lot to good sports.

It takes nerve to try anything first, especially when everybody believes "it can't be done."

The man who goes off into the wilderness alone deserves credit, but not so much as the man who defies mass opinion.

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Confidence in Future

UNTIL recently, mass opinion was reactionary, clinging to what was old, doubting what was new.

Now it seems to be going to the other extreme, looking askance at what is old, worshiping what is new.

Confidence has seized upon the future, rather than the past.

In these days, we look ahead, instead of backward, bet on improvements that are just around the corner, and take it for granted that our children will be better off than their grandfathers.

There probably is as much danger in overdoing the new viewpoint as there was in overdoing the old one.

We can not afford to ignore human experience, or put too much faith in our own deductions.

Just because we have learned to do a certain thing doesn't mean that we understand its effect.

Dream Fails to Be True

EVER since rapid transit came into existence we have assumed that it would relieve congestion.

The first street car in New York City, and in this country, for that matter, made its appearance ninety-seven years ago.

Soon afterward a local paper prophesied that it would decentralize the community.

"Instead of being cramped and confined to a single lot of ground and a close atmosphere in the city," said the paper, "an acre or two will be purchased and a comfortable house built at reduced costs, a garden, orchard, dairy and other conveniences follow; and the train of railroad carriages will start from Trinity church at 3 o'clock and will carry passengers to Harlech and the intermediate stopping places, with as much facility and ease as they now are carried to Greenwich Village."

After being fooled for nearly a century, we persist in the blind faith that rapid transit, whether in the form of subways, or automobiles, will decentralize our towns.

The more we have of it, the greater our towns grow, and the fewer people we have living in the country.

Each census shows a steady drift in this direction.

Not only our rural population, but our small villages are disappearing and rapid transit is the chief cause.

Napoleon Far-Sighted

THE necklace which Napoleon gave Marie Louise on the birth of their son is exhibited by a New York jeweler. Though a curiosity in itself, it is more of a curiosity, because of the vanished glory it symbolizes.

Not that there is any less display of jewelry than there was in Napoleon's time, or that the plutocrats of this age do not worship it as enthusiastically as did the aristocrats of his, but that it has become more a matter of commerce than of politics, more an emblem of wealth than power.

With all his ambition and love of pomp, Napoleon was not blind to the advent of new forces and the dawn of a new epoch.

When he sold Louisiana to the United States, he said he had some-thing that would one day humble the pride of Great Britain.

He also said that within one hundred years, Europe would be-  
come Cossack or Republican, and that China was a sleeping giant of whom those who awoke her should beware.

Leaders Looked Ahead

THE greater minds always have perceived the shadow of coming events.

Indeed, that, more than anything else, perhaps, is what made them great.

The leaders of today, whether in politics, trade, or finance, are those who realized what was coming, and who made their plans accordingly—the Rockefellers, who foresaw what oil meant; the Carnegies, who ap-  
preciated the value of steel; the Wrights, who believed that men could fly, though every one said it was impossible, and the real estate men who were not deceived as to the effect of rapid transit.

Leaders Looked Ahead

THE creation of the master detective was a splendid piece of portraiture. Its chance to survive rests upon the evidence that in spite of competition, nobody ever has done a more fascinating detective.

Within the last four or five years there have been no lack of mystery stories. Everybody has taken a hand in the game and Van Dine's Philo Vance has come forth as the kingpin of investigators. Yet Philo's most magnificent efforts are as bold as child's play compared to the triumphs of Sherlock Holmes.

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