



The Indianapolis Times

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

Making Laws

The people expected confusion in the present legislature. The stage was set for that. The lower house adheres to one party, the senate to another and the Governor is uncertain as to everything.

But the people did not expect chaos and corruption. There may be neither, but the appearance and atmosphere suggests both.

The vote on the bill to reduce the legal rate for small loans from 42 to 30 per cent a year, followed a broad suggestion from the floor that a huge sum of money had been spent to defeat it. No one of those who voted against this measure resented the charge. No one demanded an inquiry. The vote was suspiciously close. One vote would have saved even this mild measure of relief for those whose misfortunes send them to the money changers.

One vote would have made this measure a law. That vote was missing. Five were absent. Some of the names of those who voted against the bill make good an excuse for many members to make good with the dry leaders and alibi their real misdeeds.

No one will deny that there has been more drinking in Indianapolis during this session than during all the rest of the year. That is, no one except those physically and purposely blind.

Thus far the legislature has done nothing to relieve the people of unjust burdens, nothing to protect them against the greedy and the strong. Fanaticism rules. The utilities are safe. The money lenders can continue their extortions. The people pay.

The Veto Habit

With congress promptly passing the veterans' loan bill over his veto, the President is reported ready to veto the Muscle Shoals bill and the Wagner employment exchange bill.

Certainly Hoover is courageous in these matters. But is he wise? We don't think so. If his veto policy were in line with his campaign pledges, his action would be understandable. But it is not.

He refused to veto the higher tariff bill, which violated his pledges and prolonged the "business depression."

Now he plans to veto the Muscle Shoals and Wagner employment exchange measures, to which he was pledged.

All in all, Hoover seems to be getting fixed in a veto habit as inconsistent as it is dangerous.

Mr. Capone Pays—A Little

In its majesty, the law has sentenced Mr. Alphonse Capone of Chicago to six months in jail for contempt of court—and immediately liberated him on \$5,000 bail.

Subject to correction, we venture the opinion that the scar-faced one can afford to pay that \$5,000. We arrive at this opinion by the following logic:

Mr. Capone's income from his bootleg and vice syndicate reliably is estimated at \$2,000,000 a week. Making allowance for the large number of Chicago police reported on his pay roll, apparently he will not be embarrassed by the extraction of this \$5,000—even though this additional charge upon his income was unexpected and unbudgeted.

Again, subject to correction, we venture the opinion that nothing in this legal "punishment" of Mr. Capone is apt to injure his business.

To be sure, Mr. Capone has suffered inconvenience in dragging himself away from his Florida estates to Chicago in the midst of disagreeable weather. But as this business magnate himself remarked, in his mild manner: "These are hard times."

The Glory That Was Spain

The old biblical adage that the sins of the father are visited upon children through many generations may not be as true in a biological or theological sense as once believed, but there is no doubt that it possesses much historical and institutional validity.

Current events in Spain serve to remind us forcibly of this fact. No other country, perhaps, quite so strikingly illustrates the eclipse of a once great nation and culture as a result of the mistaken policy of its intellectual, religious, economic, and political rulers.

We ordinarily do not appreciate the disasters which absolutism and clerical intolerance have brought to Spain. We are prone to view Spain as a second-rate and decadent power, whose vicissitudes and problems are only what we would expect in the midst of such incompetence and mediocrity.

We think of the Spain of 1898 rather than the Spain of Charles V and Philip II. Yet the magnitude of the blow which clerical bigotry and its allies have dealt Spain can be appreciated only if we consider the Spain of today against the background of Spanish grandeur when Philip II ascended the throne in 1555.

On that day Spain was the richest and most powerful of European monarchies. Its king ruled over a greater and richer domain than any other European potentate, with the exception of the head of the present British empire. And the king of Spain was something more than a symbolic figurehead of imperial unity. He was a real monarch and administrative autocrat.

The Moors and Jews had put Spain at the forefront of European learning. Spain had taken the lead in discovery and colonization, thus carving out a great empire. She had defeated the Turks and become the chief naval power of the old world. She was rich at home and possessed in addition the immensely prosperous Netherlands.

She stood at the head in Catholic and clerical prestige, through Crusades against Moors and Jews, through later producing Loyola and the Jesuits to combat the Protestants, and through the encouragement of the Inquisition to stamp out heresy.

Wise statesmanship after 1555 would have assured and perpetuated an Iberian dominion over the modern world.

Yet no other great state ever has subsided so rapidly in prestige and power as did Spain in the half century of Philip's reign. Bigotry had led to the expulsion or suppression of the Moors, and it now was turned against the Jews.

It promoted the fatal and bloody campaigns which lost the Netherlands. It encouraged the disastrous voyage of the Spanish Armada, which forever ended the naval leadership of Spain. It continued and intensified the Inquisition, which stamped intellectual courage and independence from the Iberian peninsula.

Defauling public finance lost domestic and foreign credit. Intense mercantilistic interference with overseas trade placed an insuperable handicap upon Spanish commercial and colonial development. Political autocracy blocked the way to political progress through representative government and constitutional monarchy.

By 1600 Spain was on the toboggan and she had not yet hit bottom when the Maine sank beneath

the waves of Havana harbor on the fateful evening of Feb. 15, 1898.

Spain thus remains a classic warning to statesmen and cultural leaders of policies which should be avoided if one wishes economic prosperity, intellectual progress, and political prestige.

Henry Thomas Buckle brought out this fact with convincing thoroughness and unrivaled clarity in his famous chapter on the Spanish intellect in his History of Civilization.

No other state so forcibly illustrates the fatal results of trying to imprison the human mind in an iron cage of antique superstitions. No nation is a better proof of the fact that no social or cultural progress can be expected when the intellectual life of a nation is sealed up hermetically by the hand of the reactionary theologian.

Greatness must consist not only in temporary grandeur, but also in adaptation to new stages of civilization.

Nip and Tuck

One of the most illuminating and authoritative discussions of the evolution of contemporary criminal methods is contained in the March issue of Scripps' magazine. It is contributed by an "ex-criminal" and deals with the probable effect of prohibition

repeal upon the volume of crime in the United States.

Perhaps the most interesting section in the article is the unfolding of the evolution of present-day methods of daylight bank robbery. This indicates the futility of the common notion that crime can be frustrated and ended through defeating any one particular method or type of criminal behavior.

From 1865 to 1885 the stickup man reigned supreme in lifting the bank roll. Jesse James, the Younger brothers, and other gangs carried a reign of terror into trains, stage coaches and gambling halls. But the eighties ended this sort of thing. Straight shooting and hard riding vigilantes drove the bandits to cover.

The increased settlement of the west made it ever harder for these outlaws to hide themselves. From 1885 to 1914 there was not one daylight bank robbery in the United States. Between 1914 and 1928, no less than 1,121 were reported.

For thirty years the specialists in pilfering bank rolls turned to safe-cracking. This proved a battle in science and invention. It was nip and tuck between robber and safety engineer. The old key safe was sent to oblivion by skeleton keys. Then came the combination with the lock on the front of the safe. This was quickly solved with drills and powder.

Then the combination lock was put on the back of the safe. This simply required longer drills. So the banks adopted a chilled steel safe, too hard for drills. The bank robbers then laid one of the bank employees who knew the safe combination. This brought the time lock. The robbers retaliated with the use of nitroglycerin. The banks came back with the screw-door safe, but the robbers invented the fellow who was behind the racket.

The racket has something to do with this difference and some men who think Mr. Capone a terrible fellow are behind the racket.

Food certainly has gone down, but some other things have not.

The price at which you can get good meals in the average hotel coffee shop is astonishing. The price you still have to pay for rooms is even more astonishing.

For some inscrutable reason, about everything the farmer deals in can be bought for less, but when the farmer goes to town, it's a different story.

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