

NEW YORK, July 27.—Alfred M. Landon spoke to fellow Kansans, but he lifted up his eyes to the tall towers of lower Manhattan, from whence cometh his strength. He forswore the liberal follies of his youth and pledged his faith to the extreme right wing of the Republican Party. It was a candid and a sincere bit of autobiography which he introduced into his address when he said:

"Now, I know that many of us, at one time or another, have become dissatisfied and impatient with the efforts of our local and state administrations to solve our difficulties. At such times it has seemed to us that only a larger, more powerful unit of government could meet the need. For those who have followed such a line of reasoning I have the understanding that comes from experience."

"As a young man I was attracted to the idea of centralizing in the Federal government full power to correct the above growing difficulties of our more complex social order. When the people rejected this alternative I was as disappointed as any one. But in spite of this rejection I have lived to see many of those abuses substantially corrected by the forty-eight state legislatures in their fields and by the Federal government in its field of interstate commerce."

It is fair to assume that Gov. Landon refers to a period of almost a quarter of a century ago when he espoused the cause of Theodore Roosevelt and the Bull Moose Party.

Buck From Armageddon

COL. ROOSEVELT was impatient with a system which made conservation of natural resources all but impossible. He was not content to wait until the most backward state passed adequate legislation to do away with child labor. Indeed, he advocated the recall of Supreme Court decisions by popular referendum. And in the days of his youth Alf M. Landon shared the bright dream that a forthright nation could set about within the hour to reshape itself for joy and justice.

But Alf has become Alfred. He has been through the political mill. He has felt the tug of campaign expediency at his elbow. He can not fly in the face of his supporters. Possibly he is not utterly a reactionary, but he has come to be a very tired liberal, which is the next worst thing. And so the best which he can offer now to man or woman or child who toils from sunup till sundown is, "I look forward to the America that is to be."

The Governor means that we must have faith in Mississippi and wait until Georgia has grown weary of lynching and Arkansas is willing to protect its sharecroppers. Indeed, Alf M. Landon has grown increasingly conservative since the Cleveland convention, and he forgot to take up that section of his telegram which stated that it might be necessary to amend the Constitution in order to protect the states themselves in the right to pass welfare legislation.

A Change of Sides

THE Governor seemed to indicate that if he had in 1912 to live over again he would no longer be guilty of Progressive heresies but would stand with the Old Guard beside William Howard Taft. And it was fitting, therefore, that he should take his notification at the hands of Bert Stahl and be in constant consultation with Charlie Taft.

But what becomes of the theory promulgated at Cleveland that the G. O. P. had passed from the hands of the old leaders into the control of a simple Kansas idealist? The recantation of Alfred M. Landon was complete. Not only did he apologize for having been a liberal more than 20 years ago, but he identified the drive for effective welfare legislation in which he once believed as despotism, usurpation and a violation of the American system of government.

His promise to be definite was hardly made good through the speech, but he was clear as crystal in his remarks on labor, since he merely paraphrased the recent full page advertisement issued by the Steel Institute.

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My Day

BY ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

CAMPOBELLO, N. B., Sunday—I am beginning to get some happier letters, and today one came which was very nice.

Some time ago a young woman wrote me of the difficulties she and her husband were having, and her letter sounded so genuine that I felt I must do something. I sent her letter to an actress friend of mine in Hollywood and began to happen. My friend liked her letter and sent \$100 was found. Several other women got interested and gave her a layette and a bassinet for the expected baby; sheets and blankets to start housekeeping again. Now her letter has come giving me current news.

"We are back in Texas in a comfortable farm house, with the rent paid. We have milk, butter and our own vegetables. This is fertile country and a man can do well for himself and his family. The climate is fair, the highways are fine. It takes only a stout heart, a strong back and the urge.

"With the help of a kind hand such as we have had, we can not help but go on with lighter step and pleasanter outlook to a better life. We loved California, and still do, but here we find so much more opportunity to work in freedom. In a few days the both will be with us. He may be slightly less disinterested than he would have been in a Los Angeles hospital, but he will see home, sky, trees and happiness and his vacancy will be filled by some baby who could not get here."

They say the pioneer spirit is gone from amongst us. Well, this looks to me like courage for new adventure.

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New Books

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY PRESENTS

THEIR latest in travel sagas begins with the phrase, "Tchonchonally uttered, 'When I was in Finland . . .' and if to you that is the place of Lapps and Santa Claus and Sibelius, you will want to read Agnes Rethy's delightful book, *FINLAND, THE NEW NATION*, published (most appropriately) by the Viking Press (\$3). You will really see this little land, between the Arctic and the Baltic, its mainland approached through islands thick as stars and firmly established upon the oldest rock formations of our planet, its vast forests and beautiful harbors, its lakes splashed so plentifully over the central terrain that an aviator sees there a cover of wide meshed lace over blue silk."

You will add its 2,000,000 people, who excel in stature and sturdiness, in love of culture and steam baths, who honor their living artists, insist that their cities shall be clean and quiet, and, not least of their virtues, pay their national debts.

THEIR title *WHERE LIFE IS BETTER* (Reynal; \$3) is used ironically by James Rorty. The better it is, that is, where it is better, or likely to be better, so far as America is concerned.

For seven months he toured the length and breadth of the country, interviewing politicians, business men, unemployed, labor leaders and relief administrators. And here he reports what he heard of the "class war" of the struggle against starvation, of inadequate and bungling government relief.

The passion with which Mr. Rorty writes is that of despair. For to him the most hopeless element in the situation is that only 5 per cent of the people are even aware of what questions are involved in the economic chaos of the present. As for the other 95 per cent, they are likely to say: "The only thing that will get us out of the mess is a war."

The Indianapolis Times

MONDAY, JULY 27, 1936

Second Section

PAGE 9

INDIANAPOLIS' HOUSING PROBLEM

500 Shacks to Be Ordered Razed as Fire Hazard, Marshal Says

(Continued from Page One)

orders are to be mailed daily, as inspectors find and condemn the buildings.

The fire hazard factor can more nearly than any other be measured in dollars and cents. Mr. Scherer said insurance rates on improved property next to one or more of these derelicts often were as much higher than normal as \$2 for \$1,000 thousand dollars worth of insurance. He pointed out that they almost invariably are in congested districts and once fire might damage property now useful.

Real estate men say that when these conditions stand in a neighborhood, they spread, like a bad spot in a bushel of apples, until values of all properties have been depressed.

Almost every one of these dwellings officially has been branded by the City Health Department as "insanitary and uninhabitable for human beings."

LOOSELY, "insanitary and uninhabitable" as defined by the City Health Board means that the structure has no city water supply; that the well on the property, from which tenants must get all water, is polluted; that there is no inside sanitary toilet, and that the outside toilet is unprotected from flies, that windows and floors are not screened; that there are rats and other disease carriers; that the roof and walls do not keep out rain and cold.

To a stratum of Indianapolis society which is a numerical factor in the community health, these houses represent a refuge from the elements. They represent a place to rear children. They represent the only place they can afford to afford to make their homes.

That's why, Mr. Scherer said, he can not order as many as 1,000 more of them torn down—even though they are just as insanitary, uninhabitable and dangerous to property and health—because the tenants have no place else to go.

Hundreds of families in Indianapolis right now are living in houses officially branded by the City Health Department as not fit for human beings.

DR. HERMAN G. MORGAN, City Health Board secretary, who has charted epidemics in Indianapolis for many years, says there can be epidemic sources on a scale far greater than his inspectors gather information.

Since he became interested in the health of Indianapolis the epidemics invariably have come from sections in which housing has degenerated into a squalid cluster of such hand-me-down shacks as his inspectors now describe as "insanitary and uninhabitable."

"There was a time, not so many years ago," Dr. Morgan said, "when Indianapolis had about 30,000 of these structures. They had due wells, outside toilets at close as 15 feet to the water supply, and they were spawning grounds for disease."

"In those days typhoid mortality ran as high as 70 for each 100,000 population and the infant death rate was 135 to each 1,000 infants under one year of age.

"WE began to make real progress in cleaning up the situation when we passed an ordinance in 1916 requiring properties within specified city areas to be at least sanitary, inside flush toilets,



—Times Photos by Cottman.

Marked for destruction, because they constitute a fire hazard, are the houses shown here. No. 2 is a row of houses in Indianapolis. Joseph Scherer, chief inspector for the state fire marshal, already has entered correspondence about them with the owners. No. 2 shows the inside of one of the doomed structures. No. 2 is a property on S. East-st—a mere skeleton—that creates a fire hazard and a value hazard for the property in the background, which is being improved.

wherever sewage and city water connections were available within 100 feet of a corner of the lot.

"The typhoid mortality rate in

Indianapolis now is less than two

to 100,000 population and the in-

fant mortality is in the 40's for

each 1,000 under 1 year, with the

exception of 1935, when it was 58.

"During the depression, when

real estate values were down, my

department found it wise sharply to curtail orders for installations of sewer and water connections.

The property wouldn't support it,

and we found property owners

begging the city to take over the

property rather than compel them to

make expenditures they had no

funds for," he said.

Now that real estate values are

tending to appreciate, my depart-

ment has begun to issue these

orders in a greater volume. We

are down now to the last, tem-

perous strata, of such properties that will be hard to deal with.

The houses don't bring rent

enough to warrant the ex-

pense to the owner. Some rent as low as \$1 a month. Many of them bring no more than \$5 and \$10 monthly. All should be re-

placed," he said.

"But there are people in Indi-

anapolis who can afford to pay

no more than \$5 and \$6 a month rent.

And I doubt if there is any

way to build structures that are

inhabitable and sanitary for such

people as these," he said.

"Living in them, they are a

great expense to the community.

They people City Hospital for

medical care. The infant mor-

tality rate, I can say conservatively,

can be far higher with the

elimination of more of these

insanitary conditions.

"THE city health—I mean

North Side health—without

question suffers from these very

conditions. Fleas habitat the

places and invade North Side

kitchens. They are germ carriers.

We have traced North Side ty-

phoid to houses like these areas.

You brush these people, unfor-

tunate enough to be able to

afford no better living conditions,

in your downtown business life

and frequently in your recrea-

tional life.

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