

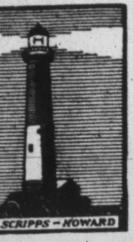
The Indianapolis Times

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Give Light and the People Will Find Their Own Way

MacARTHUR AND NIMITZ

THE argument as to American command in the Pacific has been settled by a compromise. Strategy is to remain with the joint chiefs of staff in Washington. Gen. MacArthur is to command the army, and Adm. Nimitz the navy, with Gen. Arnold retaining command of the 20th air force. Over-all command will shift according to the nature of the combined operations, as designated by the joint chiefs of staff.

This provides a new job for MacArthur, hitherto limited to the Southwest Pacific.

Because present major operations are at sea, Nimitz is in command in the offensive area. That, presumably, will continue until the navy has landed adequate army forces on the mainland—of China or Japan, or both. At that point, the navy will revert to the supporting role of the blockade—as now in the European theater—and MacArthur with the army will take over the major job on land.

This seems to be as practicable a solution as it is logical.

It should be noted, however, that this applies only to American forces. Whether Chiang Kai-shek and the British—and the Russians, if and when they enter that war—can agree on a supreme commander in the Far East, as the Western allies agreed on Gen. Eisenhower, is still an open question.

HELPING FIGHT CANCER

THE fight against cancer, commendable in itself, has suffered from lack of direction. Newspaper readers know all too well that skilled brains have from time to time turned up this or that finding from one point or another, never under an over-all plan.

As president of the American Cancer Society, Eric Johnston plans to improve that. He announces a \$5,000,000 campaign this month, with \$3,000,000 of the total to be spent for education, \$2,000,000 for research.

Under the society's program, research specialists will be grouped in committees whose members will confer, at the society's expense, on projects within their various fields. Their findings will be scrutinized by a national body which is to co-ordinate, modify or expand them as it sees best.

Specialists under the direction of the society are to be paid, a matter which should attract adequate men and help assure continuity.

While this program may not be the complete answer to all problems in our fight against cancer, it should yield vast benefits. The drive for funds deserves support.

NEW GOVERNOR'S MANSION

THE state budget committee has acted wisely in purchasing the J. H. Trimble estate at 4343 North Meridian street as a home for Indiana governors.

The old governor's mansion on Fall Creek boulevard did not provide adequately for the convenience and comfort of the state executive and his family. The governor, it should be remembered, is the official representative of the state and often is called upon to play host to distinguished guests. Furthermore, his duties include a considerable amount of both formal and informal entertaining. It is a tribute to the resourcefulness of the first ladies who have occupied the mansion in recent years that they have been able to uphold the traditions of Indiana hospitality—but, at best, it has been exceedingly difficult.

The citizens of Indiana should take pride in the fact that they now own a governor's mansion which is worthy of the dignity of a great state and the high honor accorded to the men who will occupy it.

VETERANS' LETTERS

FEAR it from us to intrude in Rep. Rankin's budding inquiry into affairs of the veterans administration. But we should like to call attention to an item in a story on that agency, written by Ned Brooks of this newspaper's Washington bureau.

"Because of the clerk shortage," Mr. Brooks reported, "many replies have to be recorded on flexible discs, which are sent to field offices for transcribing. The finished letters are returned to Washington for signing and mailing. The process adds a week to the delay of replies. Veterans officials concede the practice is wasteful. But, they say, the mail can't be handled otherwise."

Well, do tell. Have high veterans officials ever heard of delegating authority of establishing branch managers who can answer questions, of placing men in field offices who can make decisions? Private business concerns have been doing that for years.

Mr. Rankin's investigation is to deal with the efficiency of the veterans administration. A good place to start is with this clumsy, wasteful system of answering letters.

WAR AND COMMUNITY FUND CHAIRMAN

INDIANAPOLIS has been fortunate in the competent leadership of the United War and Community Fund campaigns in recent years, and that tradition is upheld by the appointment of J. G. Sinclair to direct the drive for 1945.

Before coming here three and a half years ago as manager of the Indianapolis division of the Shell Oil Co., Mr. Sinclair was active in the war fund campaigns in Chicago and he has been a key man in the local organization for two years. His experience and executive ability should go a long way toward insuring the success of this community activity on which so much depends.

NO PEACETIME OWI

OWI Chief Elmer Davis doesn't think that the OWI will continue after the war or that any official government news agency will take its place. He does admit, however, that the state department may take over some OWI functions, such as releasing texts of speeches and official documents.

We hope that those functions don't grow into a propaganda race with other nations, since the truth of unslanted news is a demonstrable weapon for peace. Mr. Davis says that "after the war we are counting on the press associations to do the news job." And they can do it, as no one knows better than that veteran and able reporter, Elmer Davis.

REFLECTIONS

Incredible

By Harry Hansen

WHEN THE 1st U. S. army took its 300,000th Nazi prisoner, the latter declared: "It is incredible." On the literary front, Lewis Carroll is incredible: "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" is an incredible book and Florence Becker Lennon's biography of Carroll, "Victoria Through the Looking-Glass," is the most incredible of all. Part of the wonder of wonders is that it appears with the imprint of Simon & Schuster (\$3.50).

This, I suspect, will be confirmed Carrollians about as much as Boswell's biography pleased the old friends of Samuel Johnson. Lewis Carroll, telling the Oxford story to three little girls on a hot July picnic trip in 1862, fades into the Oxford mathematician, Charles L. Dodgson, who remained all his life a sort of pixie, never quite growing into the adult world, although he was able to teach geometry to students at Oxford.

Nary a Hair Fell

SHE IS really much kinder to him than many of his critics, taking no mean advantage of a man who "had an odd—and, of course, frustrated—love for little girls." She prefers to see him as part of his Victorian times, but she is a relentless searcher for every bit of personal evidence. I doubt that even a writer's life was tracked down by literary sleuth with such determined purpose. Nary a hair fell from Dodgson's thinking locks without being examined for color and texture and filed and indexed, by Mrs. Lennon.

Of course he loved little girls, but, as Mrs. Lennon puts it, "in part identifying himself with them, in part substituting child-friends for more difficult and responsible adult relationships." If he took them rowing there was always a chaperon present—good old Victorian days!

His slightest adventure is so carefully annotated that we know all about it. For instance, Mrs. Lennon tells how Dodgson would choose the most comfortable boat and bestow his guests and the luncheon baskets "with accurate balance"; how he rowed stroke and one of the girls "might hold the tiller rope." This meticulous charting of boating in 1862 is typical of Mrs. Lennon's method.

'Adequate' for America

DODGSON PROBABLY was a left-handed child, and the Victorians didn't like that. He had a "prolonged youth," and could not understand that childhood friends grew up. When they became old enough for him to raise his hat to them, he dropped them. He "never attained the stage of adult love." If he was ever in love with the original Alice, there is no evidence of it. When Alice married he hoped her first-born would be named Alice; when she asked him to be godfather to a boy he did not reply—he could not tolerate boys.

Interesting details about the publication of his books are merged into the general narrative, not emphasized. Dodgson personally paid Tenniel for the illustrations and likewise paid the engraving bill of the two Alice books. He called in the plates of the 1865 edition because they seemed imperfect. Only 48 copies got away from him. The remaining 1932 copies were shipped to Appleton in New York, because Dodgson thought they were "adequate" for America.

A Few Reservations

MRS. LENNON'S integrity as a biographer is unquestioned and no doubt the real Dodgson comes through, though to me he is something of a bore. I should like to have seen more impressionistic writing on the order of the few pages devoted to Mrs. Alice Hargrave's appearance, at 80, at Columbia University in 1932.

The organization of the book is such that every subject—immaturity, love life, duality, etc.—is never completely disposed of but continues to pop up in marginal writing. For instance, in one letter Dodgson signs himself Dodo. Thereupon Mrs. Lennon enlightens us about the name, habits and connotation of the dodo, asking "Why, except for phonetic reasons, should Carroll have associated himself with this unfortunate bird?" Why, indeed?

Later she follows the familiar method of trying to make every word and image symptomatic of Dodgson's state of mind. Sounders is Mrs. Lennon's estimate of the contribution that Dodgson makes to English literature—his knack of using the elements of a dream without, except for a slip or two, admitting that it is dreaming, and his ability to combine "meaning with non-meaning," which made his child story an adult's work. He had a split personality and his frustration escaped into the Lewis Carroll who has completely eclipsed the Oxford mathematician.

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