The Evening World.

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DISTRICT ATTORNEY BANTON AND THE TAXI-BONDING LAW.

WILL somebody explain the strange attitude of District Attorney Banton toward the new Taxi-Bonding Law which, for the greater protection of the public, requires indemnity bonds or insurance policies for owners of taxicabs and other classes of motor vehicles transporting passengers for hire in cities of the first class in this State?

Here is a law enacted by the State Legislature and so far upheld by the courts.

On June 30, the day before the law went into effect, Judges Hough, Manton and A. N. Hand, sitting as a Federal Statutory Court, denied a motion for an injunction against the operation of the law. Judge Hough declared that the only way in which the court could entertain the motion would be on a showing that the new law was obnoxious to the Constitution. No such showing was made.

Last week Justice Finch of the State Supreme Court upheld this same law and denied an application for an injunction restraining the Police Commissioner, District Attorney and Attorney General from enforcing it. In his decision Justice Finch said:

> "The act, in regulating a class of common carriers for hire, is a valid exercise of the police power, and the means adopted appear to be reasonably appropriate to the end sought. Robert S. Conklin, representing the Attorney General, brought to the attention of the court the fact that there are upward of 12,000 unpaid judgments duly recovered for injuries and damages caused by the negligent and wilful acts of taxicab drivers.
>
> "It is clear that the Legislature has devised a plan effectively to regulate this class of carriers by fixing responsibility, even though in certain cases it may be only to a small extent."

Yet instead of helping to enforce this law which has been sustained by the courts, District Attorney Banton is still helping taxicab owners and operators to challenge it. In a test case now under way, the arrest of the chauffeur was arranged between the District Attorney and the taxicab owners.

Seventeen other States have laws similar to this law. The courts have as yet cast no doubts upon its constitutionality in this State.

Why, then, should District Attorney Banton treat it otherwise than as a law to be duly and straightforwardly enforced?

Even fairest-minded Americans will agree that the most helpful contributor toward the settlement of present strike troubles is NOT Eugene V. Debs.

JUST AS IMPORTANT.

ANOTHER fire in the east side subway Sunday seems to have been handled with skill and common sense.

News reports are so conflicting that the public is not certain as to the difference between this fire and the recent one in which more than a hundred passengers were threatened with death by suffocation.

One feature of all the reports is that the motorman managed to run his train several blocks to a station where passengers could alight with a minimum of inconvenience.

This short-circuit accident which did not prove disastrous and was well handled deserves an investigation as thorough and comprehensive as the previous fire. The Interborough, the Transit Commission—and even Mayor Hylan and the city departments—would do well to discover the differences between the two, find out exactly how the procedure Sunday was better than ten days before and so take steps to install equipment and instruct motormen and conductors in the best ways to meet an emergency.

Careful planning to prevent and minimize future fires is far better than recriminations over past mistakes.

A WONDERFUL SAFETY RECORD.

IN a twelvemonth, the Air Mail Service announces, postal flyers have flown a distance equal to seventy times around the world.

But the most striking fact of the report is that not a single mail pilot has been killed in flight. This compares with twenty-one deaths in the previous year.

The air mail completed 92.5 per cent. of its trips in all sorts of weather and over all sorts of territory, including the mountain stretches in the New York to San Francisco service. The mileage was 94 per cent. of what was planned.

A year ago the air mail was seriously criticised because of the death record. Some models of planes were abandoned and the present highly satisfactory record is the result. Criticism justified itself.

The air mail is not on a paying basis. It is the duty of Congress and the Post Office Department to investigate as to the practicability of continuing the service. But it is reassuring to find that pilots have at last been provided with safe planes—and also that such reliable machines are in existence.

WHEN PARLEY FAILS.

ALTHOUGH a majority of the bituminous coal operators pay lip service to the proposals advanced by the President, the ultimate effect is no more satisfactory than the reply of the miners.

Professing adherence to "the broad principle of arbitration," the operators nevertheless seek as a practical matter to narrow arbitration to district areas and so to overthrow a system of collective bargaining which for years has given better results than the district bargaining it superseded. This principle, the check-off, and the other stipulations made by one district or another—all these are fair issues to submit to arbitration.

The President's prompt reply to the operators may mean much or little, depending on the stiffness of the Presidential backbone. But disregarding the polite phraseology and judging the published statements by immediate effects, the public can only conclude that the operators, like the miners, prefer a private fight and "the public be damned."

That is what will happen if it is permitted to happen.

The attitude of both parties to the coal strike makes more difficult an immediate solution. But the joint refusal may make simpler the remedy for the fundamental evils of the coal industry.

A week ago The Evening World said of President Harding's proposal for a commission of arbitration and inquiry:

If either miners or operators hesitate, the commission must go on with that party unrepresented. Even if both parties to the dispute should refuse, the public group should proceed to investigate.

That advice is good to-day. By refusing the President's offer both the miners and the operators have forfeited claim to special representation and consideration. The President should proceed to appoint an able and courageous commission, armed with absolute power of investigation and requested to form a programme of regulation for the coal industry at the earliest moment.

Three of the fundamental evils which must be met and faced as part of a permanent solution are: the division in labor policies; the excess of mine capacity, and the over-supply of labor.

FROM A GREAT AND TIMELY SPEECH.

We have a this time an indebtedness of about $22,000,000,000. Our budget is running from $3,500,000,000 upward. According to the report of Mr. Mellon, the Secretary of the Treasury, the sources of taxes in this country are drying quite as rapidly as in Great Britain. We have a deficit for 1923 estimated at $500,000,000. That is the situation presented to us, not as a speculative proposition but by actual figures. At the close of the Civil War we had an indebtedness of about $2,674,815,356. By 1915 we had reduced the indebtedness of the Government to $1,090,148,006. In other words, during the space of fifty years we had reduced our public indebtedness something over $1,000,000,000. If we are to judge the future by the past, we now have an indebtedness which it will take us more than 1,000 years to lift, to say nothing of the constantly increasing burden in the way of increased taxes from year to year by reason of the increased budgets; and it is proposed, in addition to that which we already have, to lay on an extra indebtedness.—Senator William E. Borah to the United States Senate.

ACHES AND PAINS

Bobbed hair is not becoming to fat flappers.

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Mr. Hearst reminds the public that he has been nearly forty years in journalism. Yet he is still regarded as a frivolous young thing with hopes that he will grow up.

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"Just my luck," I heard him say
When his money went at play:
"Just my luck," I heard him cry
When the chance went flitting by.

•

The step between a rightful strike and civil war is altogether too short.

•

Britain is sending a delegation here to discuss debts. This is always painful, but easier than settling up.

•

Think of Henry Cabot Lodge calling at the White House and finding W. G. H. too busy to see him. H. C. L. had better have joined the League of Nations.

•

E. W. Howe says that in so good a country as this poverty is a fault and should be punished. It usually is—automatically.

JOHN KEETZ.

Can You Beat It!

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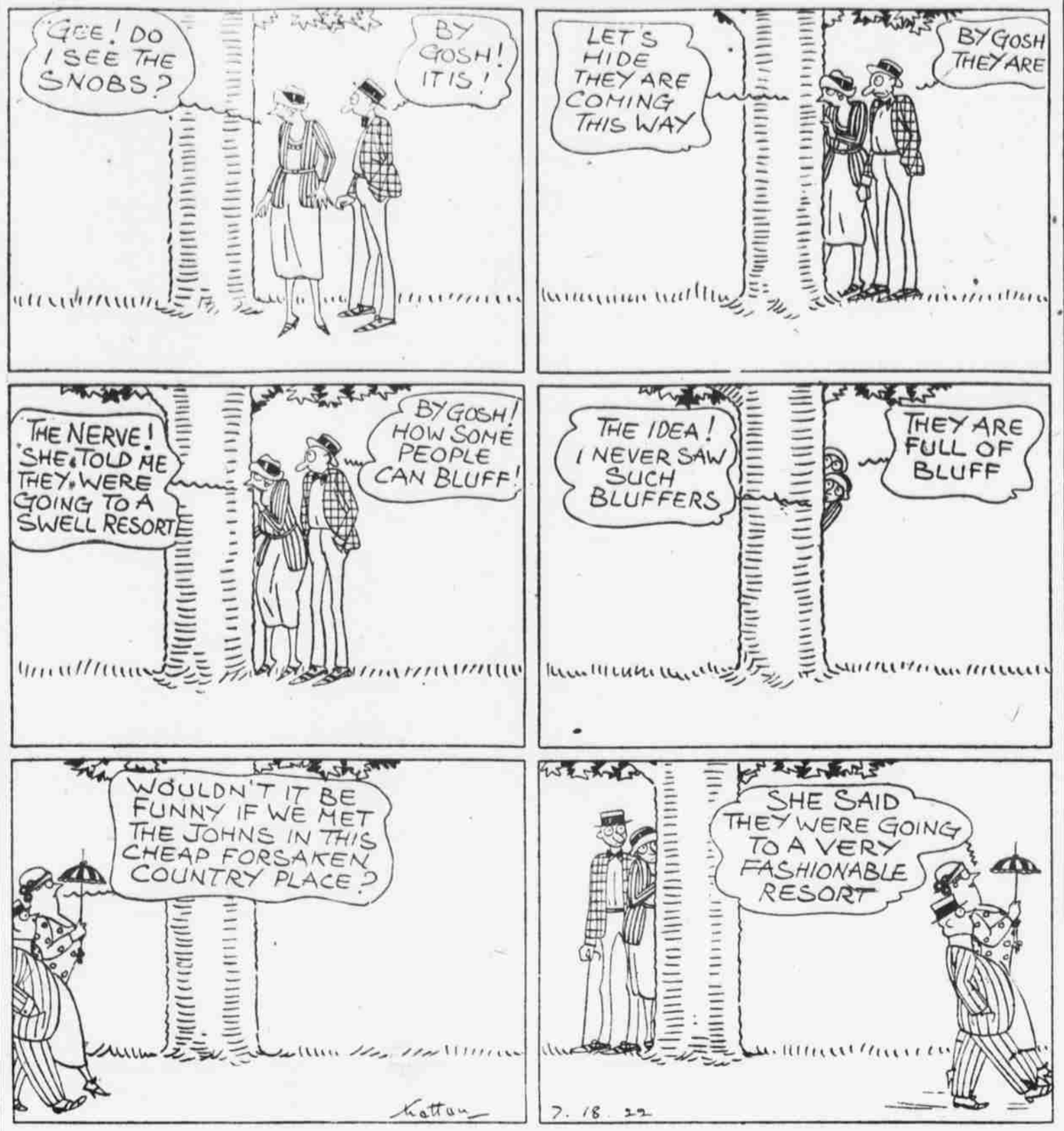
By Maurice Ketten



From Evening World Readers

What kind of letter do you find most readable? Isn't it the one that gives the worth of a thousand words in a couple of hundred? There is fine mental exercise and a lot of satisfaction in trying to say much in a few words. Take time to be brief.

Tetrachloride Profits.

To the Editor of The Evening World:

Mayor Hylan's somewhat selfish effort to get popularity by ruining the business of the pyrene manufacturers has an aspect which has not been touched.

It has been pointed out often that there are a score of companies selling extinguishers under different patent names for their containers which use the tetrachloride of carbon mixture both for fire extinguishing and removing grease stains from clothing. (Camp Fire Marshals of the A. E. F. were frequently warned, with the utmost secrecy, by the way, to make frequent inspections of hand extinguishers in the quarters of officers, to make sure that the officers were not emptying the containers by using the flued to keep their uniforms neat; enlisted men were supposed to be able to draw clean clothing when they needed it—officers couldn't.)

But why didn't the Mayor get after the whole bunch of tetrachloride extinguisher makers as profiteers? They chage $1 for a quart of the fluid to refill the containers. A manufacturer who has to buy quantities of tetrachloride of carbon from wholesale chemical houses to fireproof inflammable liquids used in his plant, tells me he buys all he wants at 11 cents a pound and it takes eleven pounds to make a saturated solution in a gallon of water—or a little more than 30 cents a quart.

D.

Cracking.

To the Editor of The Evening World:

I was amused by the letter in your Wednesday issue signed "Public Service." He says: "The people speak of voting this fall for the return of the devil's brew." Then he calmly admits he has liquor in his cellar—for medicinal purposes, of course!

When the poor man who could not afford to stock his cellar like this wise temperance writer did has illness in the family all he has to do is pay for a doctor's prescription, then pay a rousing good price to a druggist for diluted, inferior stuff which in many cases is not fit to drink, or else let the patient die of "flu" or whatever he is afflicted with. It's so nice for the Probitionists to protect the poor man like that when their own cellars are stocked.

The letter continues: "All working people are better clothed and fed than before Prohibition." I wonder if any one believes that rank lie. The money the poor man once spent for his wholesome glass of beer is now spent for tax to help support Prohibition. He doesn't mention the millions who are jobless—partially due to Prohibition. Evidently the people in his block stocked their cellars first, then bought a lot of clothes afterward.

He refers to himself and fellow Prohibitionists as "we Americans." While the real Americans were fighting the war to free the world from tyranny the Prohibitionists were busy slipping over this obnoxious law on the country, and since their temporary victory they have suddenly become the only "we Americans."

The soldiers who fought the war are against Prohibition—are they Americans? Labor came out flat-footed for beer and wine—are they Americans? The Elks are against Prohibition—and they are first class Americans. How about the thousands who refused to sail on dry American ships? Are they Americans?

The letter states: "Our Senators and Representatives know enough not to pay any attention to the raving of the wets." They also knew enough not to make the United States ships dry because real Americans would not sail on them.

Mr. Anderson said "Prohibition is cracking." It isn't cracking, it's cracked—and WE Americans are going to put the Prohibitionists in their places so that America will be a fit place for free men to live, as the men who wrote the Constitution of the United States meant it to be.

And as for The Evening World, it is the finest paper in New York. Any paper which has the courage to criticise an obnoxious, unenforcable law which the best people in America do not obey is 100 per cent. American.

J. J. BYRNES.

New York, July 13, 1922.

Safety First.

To the Editor of The Evening World:

You are worthy of praise for your never ending drive in advocating public safety and happiness. Your plan, as described in yesterday's Evening World for securing public safety in the subway is excellent.

The deviation from using pyrene, which, according to chemists, throws off phosgene gas when cast upon flames, will, perhaps, save many lives in case such an accident occurs again. Your plan, however, that of cutting off the electric current in the smallest possible number of seconds after a short circuit occurs in a car, will be very effective.

Also your suggestion of using a few buckets of sand and thus more readily extinguishing the fire will, I hope, be seriously considered by the proper authorities.

They should heed your call because your call is that of the public.

Your indomitable perseverance in bringing about complete public safety is a praiseworthy undertaking which the people must not pass unnoticed. Your attitude toward New Yorkers is the one that will obviate our present misfortune.

GEO. CASAVIS.

New York, July 13, 1922.

UNCOMMON SENSE

By John Blake

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GREAT WOMEN.

Interesting but rather futile is the attempt to discover the ten greatest women in the world.

Ten great women may easily be found.

Any intelligent newspaper reader could make his own list and it would be accurate.

But there is no person living who can say who are the ten greatest women in the world.

It may be that there are hundreds of women now living who are greater than any of those named in the lists that have been printed.

This statement is not at all disparaging to any great and prominent women whose names figure in the news.

But women are engaged as yet so little in business, they figure, in comparison to their numbers, so little in public life, that many of the greatest are known only to their families and to their immediate neighbors.

Abraham Lincoln's mother, with little education and no prominence at all, was one of the greatest women of her time. His stepmother was another great woman.

Neither of them could have made a political address, or given a lecture in a young women's college.

But together they gave life and training and inspiration to one of the greatest men ever born into the world.

Any woman who successfully raises a family of children, teaching each child to go out into the world clean in life and ambitious to do something useful, is great.

The sacrifices such women endure cheerfully would be impossible to any man.

The inspiration they give to their children is beyond estimation.

Almost any sensible man will insist that his mother was one of the greatest women in the world and it would be idle to dispute him.

Because men have written most of the history, the importance of women in the world has never been fully understood.

Even if women had written it the same thing would be true.

For they would have praised their husbands or their sons lavishly and said little about themselves.

A statue to motherhood would well commemorate the greatest women in the world.

For it is what women do as mothers to their sons and to their daughters that comprises the noblest work that has been done for mankind through all the ages.

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT WORD?

189—VOLCANO.

The word "volcano" tells an interesting story. The word was taken over by the English language direct from the Latin "volcanus." The older form of "volcanus" is "vulcanus," which is taken direct from the name of the mythological character, Vulcan. Vulcan, it will be recalled, was the gentleman who carried on blacksmithing operations underground, on an island in the Aegean.

It is quite likely that evidences of his active forge were visible from time to time in the neighborhood. It is a certainty, in fact, that Vulcan was the creation of the mind, seeking to explain these visible subterranean activities.

What more natural then that when man learned something about the real nature of these activities he should give to them the name of his hand-made divinity?

Unwieldy China

By Maubert St. Georges

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THE FAMILY.

In China the national unit is not the individual, but the family. This does not mean only the parents and their children, but a large circle of blood relationship. Most of the villages of China are inhabited by one or perhaps several such families who pool their resources for the common good so as to provide for themselves schools, hospitals and such things as the Government should be responsible for, but which the comparatively high taxes they pay failed to procure for them until very recently.

This recognition of the family as a unit is not only an ethical tradition preserved among the people but a legal fact upheld by the state. For instance, until recently crimes were punished not only on the guilty one, but on his relatives as well—even on the most distant ones if the crime was great—on the theory that something must be wrong with a family that could produce a criminal.

This family system has many advantages. By tending to discourage individuality in order to strengthen a community of interests it has served to preserve the fine moral standards for which the Chinese are noted, and made it possible to unite under one government one-quarter of the world's population. The respect of the family, which developed into ancestor worship and brought about the belief that no crime was more terrible than to die without leaving sons to carry on the family, was the principal cause of the longevity of the race, maintaining one of the highest birth rates in the world throughout a history crammed with wars, plagues and famines.

Each of these arguments has another side, however. The subordinating of the individual will to that of the family and the constant veneration of the past finally does away with moral courage, perseverance and far-sightedness, the secrets of our own successes. It is the lack of these qualities both in individuals and in the people as a whole that has been such a handicap to the Chinese in their present troubles. Similarly the large birth rate, though it may have helped China to recuperate after crises, has by continually increasing numbers brought about extreme poverty and all its attendent evils.

The greatest break in the old order of things that has taken place in China has been with the traditional family system. Yet it is only in the treaty ports that modern influences have begun to make themselves manifest, while the interior remains practicallly untouched in its adherence to the past, and concubinage, slavery, infant marriages and all such old pernicious customs continue, unrestricted in any way.

When You Go to the Museum

AN ESKIMO HOME.

A housewife on the upper east side, engaged in her household duties, does not differ materially from the Eskimo housewife shown in the interior of an igloo or snow-house in the North Corridor, main floor, of the Museum of Natural History.

She is bending over the pot, but the contents of the pot are not a Hungarian goulash, but blubber, which is the great food staple of the Arctic North. And the fire under the pot, instead of being coal, is seal oil, contained in a primitive lamp.

To give the touch that makes the whole world kin, a bright-eyed, furbundled imp of a baby is lying on its little belly beside the mother, waiting for the pot to boil. And the domed snow-house is bigger by a good deal than the average New York kitchenette.

WHOSE BIRTHDAY?

JULY 18.—WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY was born in Calcutta, India, July 18, 1811, and died Dec. 24, 1863. He attended the London Charterhouse School and Cambridge University, but he left the latter before graduating. At the death of his father he inherited a large fortune, but through extensive traveling and personal extravagance, he soon found himself almost penniless. Originally he had intended to become an artist, but he became convinced that literature would be more suitable to his taste and ability. The greater part of his works were published monthly in magazines, and included "The Paris Sketch Book," "Vanity Fair," which novel served to give him first rank among the novelists of England. "The Newcomes," which was his most popular novel, "The Virginians," "Denis Duval," "Henry Esmond," and "The Four Georges."

"That's a Fact"

By Albert P. Southwick

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Priscian was a great grammarian of the fifth century. The Latin phrase "diminuere Prisciani caput" ("to break Priscian's head"), means "to violate the rules of grammar."

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"Howe's Cave" is a natural curiosity in Schoharie County, N. Y. It has been penetrated a distance of eight or ten miles, and visitors usually go in about one-third of the distance. Discovered in 1842, it is believed to be surpassed only by the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky. It is also called "Otsgaragee Cavern."

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"The Butcher of England" was a surname given to John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, about 1470, on account of his cruelty.