

THE EVENING STAR

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An Ungraceful Retreat.

I am too unhappy to speak. This is the first time in thirty years of service that I am forced to leave my post. But, under instructions from Washington, I cannot risk the lives of loyal staff men. I am not deserting.

—Ambassador Nelson T. Johnson.

Americans will not read, without a blush of shame, these poignant words of our envoy to China, explaining why, on State Department orders, he and his staff have evacuated the legation at Nanking and taken refuge aboard an American patrol boat thirty miles up the Yangtze.

Their precipitate departure was occasioned by the demand of the Japanese naval forces now dominating Nanking and their warning that foreigners there will face danger of death from the air beginning at noon today.

At that hour the invaders calmly announce their intention of wiping the seat of Chiang Kai-shek's government from the face of the earth by aerial bombardment as the chosen means of crushing China's resistance to Tokio's campaign of subjugation.

Everybody who knows Nelson Johnson will realize the anguish that must have filled him when he delivered the above-quoted message to the Associated Press. His friends need no assurance that he has not "deserted." Seasoned soldier of diplomacy that he is, they fully understand that Ambassador Johnson is only obeying orders, as is his duty.

The blame for the ungraceful retreat belongs exclusively in Washington. It is more than ungraceful. It is abject and humiliating. It does not become a great power like the United States. It would be degrading under any circumstances.

It is particularly unpalatable because it takes place under duress and because, up to the latest accounts, other countries, like Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany and Italy, have decided to "carry on" at Nanking, London and Paris.

In announcing that their embassies will be maintained, warn the Japanese that they will be held responsible for any loss of life or damage to property of British and French nationals.

Ambassador Johnson's enforced departure is especially repugnant to this country because it does violence to one of the proudest usages of the United States foreign service. It is not in the manner of Townsend Harris, our first diplomatic representative in Japan, who, at the time of the Shogunate rebellion, resolutely stood his ground at Yedo, even after the brutal murder of his secretary and chief aide.

Harris refused to abandon the American legation, though all his foreign colleagues, the envoys of the Netherlands, France, Great Britain and Prussia, fled in terror the moment peril to foreigners became acute. Not until nearly two years later did Harris' fugitive conferees, as Dr. Herbert H. Gowen narrates in his account of the American envoy's trail-blazing career in Japan, "return to Yedo, perhaps a little ashamed and annoyed at their precipitancy."

Nor is today's scuttle at Nanking in the manner of Elihu B. Washburne, United States Minister at Paris at the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870. Fresh from a mere week as President Grant's Secretary of State, Washburne protected with the Stars and Stripes the legations of the various German states in Paris. Though the government had gone away, as Molke's armies enveloped the capital, Washburne remained there throughout the siege, the only foreign envoy who continued at his post during the terrible days of the Commune.

He protected not only Germans, but all the foreigners abandoned by their ministers, and served at Paris until 1877.

Nor is the State Department's self-abandonment in the manner of Myron T. Herrick, World War Ambassador to France, who, twenty-three years ago this week, when German guns were pounding at the gates of Paris, declined to yield his ground and kept the embassy flag flying and its business going, despite the government's flight to Bordeaux.

Herrick lived to become an idol of the French nation, for his action bolstered its morale to a degree that even a military victory could hardly have outstripped.

Nor, to come down to our own time, are today's sad events at Nanking true to the form set by men like Ambassador Sumner Welles during the dangers of the Machado purge at Havana in 1933; or by Cornelius van Engelb, our charge d'affaires at Addis Ababa in 1935, when Ethiopia's doomed capital was turned into a shambles; or by Eric Wendelin, American charge at Madrid in the civil war crisis of a year ago.

On the walls of the State Department hangs a memorial tablet dedicated to diplomatic and consular officers of the United States "who, while on active duty, lost their lives under heroic or tragic circumstances." The memory of those sixty-five warriors of peace is not honored by the run-and-hide instruction which Nelson Truster Johnson is this day reluctantly following, in derogation of the proud traditions of the service he has so long adorned.

Just Another One.

It may reasonably be questioned whether the members of the National Resources Committee, from whom has just come a report proposing a Greater Washington, embracing areas of the District and nearby Maryland and Virginia, have made an adequate study of the history of the Capital's creation and development. Else they would not so lightly, almost casually, propose that "as an experiment" the Federal Government should co-operate with the States of Maryland and Virginia and make use of the unique opportunity to devise a complete scheme of integrated government for the District of Columbia and the urbanized areas within the metropolitan district.

Quite wisely the report did not go so far as to suggest specific boundaries for the enlarged municipality, nor did it go into detail concerning which governmental functions would be combined for all the communities. For such specifications would have been very difficult to formulate and in the light of the history of Capital making—which, as already suggested, it is evident that the committee did not closely study—they would, if proposed, have been certainly subject to immediate critical analysis by the people of two States and by the Congress of the United States, not to mention the disfranchised but still sentient community known as the District of Columbia.

The initial phrase of the committee's statement relative to this matter suffices, if taken seriously, to arouse the apprehensions of the residents of all three of the jurisdictions directly affected, Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. That phrase is "as an experiment." Thus it is proposed to make a sort of "proving ground" of the national metropolitan area for experimental projects of State and municipal administration, in matters of health, sanitation, public safety, education and other functions in overlapping urban districts.

It is readily to be acknowledged that there are some very loose parts in the American municipal machinery. And it is quite evident that the public health would be more surely conserved, public education would be more effectively advanced, public safety would be more definitely and economically assured if one system of administration were adopted—provided, of course, that it were a good system, soundly and efficiently conducted. But why make the national metropolitan area—as already thus described—the laboratory field of experimentation? Is it because this area, with its politically helpless population, could not effectively protest or resist? Such an answer is justified by the experiences which the District has suffered for many years of government without representation.

But there is another angle to this matter. It relates to the adjacent communities that form part of what is generally known as the Greater Capital area, the nearby sections of Maryland and Virginia. Both of those States contributed—more or less willy-nilly—to the creation of the Federal Capital, authorized by that paragraph of the Constitution which gave to the Congress the power "to exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular States, and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of the Government of the United States." One of those States, a little more than half a century after the cession of a slice of its territory to the Federal jurisdiction, was granted it back. The other was not thus restored of its territory.

Now, can it be believed that Virginia, having given and recovered jurisdiction over its share of the hundred square miles that constituted the original Federal District, would ever consent to a second cession to permit the conduct of an experiment in co-ordinated municipal management? Or that Maryland, already stripped of jurisdiction over some sixty-six square miles of its terrain, would agree to extend to the Federal jurisdiction an uncomputed area of land lying in the twilight zone of political enlightenment?

These are practical questions, however impractical may seem the proposal of the National Resources Committee. Even though the report, as it is now outlined, may be no more than a bit of wishful thinking—which seems to be quite the style in Government circles just at present—it is to be considered seriously, as indicating a trend in official thought that if carried out into works, as have so many other extraordinary projects during the past four or five years, will reduce the Constitution and innumerable statutes to mere scraps of paper with no guarantee of the maintenance of a tribunal of justice capable of resisting encroachment upon the basic law of the land.

So numerous have been the departures from the normal lines of national thought during the past fifty-four months that each now becomes in turn in the public estimation "just another one of those things." Yet each requires to be noted as a part of a pattern, with an abiding hope prevailing that eventually, perhaps soon, political nature will take its course and the national balance will be restored.

Power of Prayer.

For those who are skeptical and doubtful, this story, perhaps, should be told. In a Washington hospital there lay upon a bed of pain a great and good servant of one branch of the Christian church. He was desperately ill. Medical science had done for him all that it could—in vain. It seemed to his friends, watching beside him, that the end was definitely at hand. Yet they

THE POLITICAL MILL

BY G. GOULD LINCOLN.

Republican headquarters is having a busy week. Today party leaders of cities of 500,000 population or more are meeting with Chairman John Hamilton of the National Committee. Thursday the Executive Committee of the National Committee is to gather here. All this activity is the drive started by Hamilton several weeks ago for the party organization ready for the 1938 congressional elections.

Chairman Hamilton will receive reports from the city leaders and from the members of the Executive Committee. It is expected also that he will take up with the Executive Committee a proposal made by former President Hoover and others for a national convention of Republican leaders next Spring. The proposed convention, if and when it takes place, is to consider means of reviving the G. O. P. so that a real battle for the presidency may be made in 1940, as well as plans for making gains in the congressional elections next year.

And the cry of the united multitude must have been heard. Physicians later testified that the heart of the sufferer began to beat again normally. Light came back into the weary eyes. Then the patient slept—to waken refreshed and encouraged. Incredibly, the crisis had been surmounted. Weeks of convalescence followed, while the patient retrieved his normal strength of body and of mind. Now he has resumed his duties.

But something even more precious than a human life has been gained for Christian fellowship in Washington. Unity and brotherhood have been demonstrated. Never will the incident be forgotten by those most intimately concerned. They will remember forever the experience with God through which they have passed.

As time goes on conditions differ as to the manner of human interchange. The primitive method of dealing with a rival is to kill him. It proves unsatisfactory and ancient conditions assert themselves to demand certain inevitable rules. For every fight there will be a Red Cross unit and some child bereft will wait its protest regardless of the speech forms which it will inherit.

Mistakes of opinion often induce errors in action. Perhaps one of the best things about the United States Constitution is the fact that it was immediately reduced to writing. It induces much talk, but everybody has an opportunity to know what he is talking about.

Chinese reports are to the effect that more than 1,000 Japanese soldiers were killed by an explosion of a plowed field. One of the disadvantages of an undeclared war is the impossibility of securing authenticated figures.

There may be a devious intention to give Mr. Hugo Black enough worries to compel him to admit that regardless of the figures in his birthday book he feels at least like a man of eighty.

Disappointment in Tammany Hall politics is a phenomenon fairly well understood by Senator Copeland. A number of competent men have survived the experience.

When the President of the United States holds a conference with newspaper men, he often falls into touch with valuable information if he is willing to receive it.

Selection of a proper word for killing in modern strife becomes difficult indeed when even "murder" seems too mild a term.

Shooting Stars.

BY PHILANDER JOHNSON.

Condensed Economics. When pages long great minds prepare For use in print or speech, We study them with patient care To learn just what they teach. The student bends his weary head And with a thoughtful frown Observes the scrolls before him spread And tries to "boil 'em down."

The page become a paragraph; The paragraph a line, Which may with ease be cut in half To leave a phrase so fine. The phrase grows fainter, by and by, And when at last he's through, He finds the portion stated by The letters "I. O. U."

Trying to Be Consistent. "Would you care to become a member of our law firm?" asked the enterprising attorney. "No," answered Senator Sorghum. "I have been helping to make laws all my life. I don't see how I can consistently interest myself in enterprises which contemplate their evasion."

Jud Tunkins says the reason he likes base ball better than politics is that when the argument is over something is decided for keeps.

Big Figures. When penny ante folks would play In hours of long ago, The game of life was rather gay. But now we find it slow.

For most of us must quit the pace In envious regret, Unless we have the means to place A billion-dollar bet.

The Presaic Lady. "I would like to lay the world at your feet," said the ardent suitor. "Why talk nonsense?" rejoined Miss Cayenne. "The world is already there, so long as I can avoid being stood on by my head in a motor accident."

"Even a dishonorable enemy should be forgiven," said Hi Ho, the sage of Chinatown, "but he should always be allowed first to defeat himself."

Eviction. No creature we permit to dwell In sweet content. We drag the oyster from his shell; He pays no rent.

"It wouldn't surprise me," said Uncle Eben, "if Satan had took a vacation 'um sinner chasin', havin' gathered up mo' dan he kin tend to."

THIS AND THAT

BY CHARLES E. TRACEWELL.

Mildew was no respecter of book bindings in such a musty Summer as that just passed. But it had its preferences. Red cloth was its favorite. Next came green cloth, and leather, in that order.

Red won easily, however. In volumes kept in open cases some form of this parasitical fungus was to be found eight out of ten times. This was the first Summer in memory that these powdery mildews collected on the books of those who are particular about such things.

It selected the backbone, and the edges of the covers, and the insides of paper jackets, if these were kept on. The jacket, in fact, was responsible for most of this invasion, it would seem, for it held moisture between it and the book cover.

The unusual humidity of the season was what caused the trouble. Like a chameleon, the mildew took on the color of the binding it rested on. If the cloth was green, the mildew was green.

If red, it was red. Certain types of soft cloths seemed favorites, probably due to the physical fact that they gave a secure hold. Fortunately all of these fungi wiped off easily if care was taken in doing it. It was another case in which too much vigor and "pep" did not work. Gentle removal was best.

If soft cloth or paper, preferably the popular face tissues, were easily rubbed along the mildew, practically all of it came off on the cloth, but if too much pressure was exerted the fungi seemed to be rubbed in.

From certain volumes the fungus would fly up in powder form, giving forth the characteristic sour smell long associated with it. Who cannot recall some distant parlor, shut up Winter and Summer, in which the few books were covered with mildew?

That odor is never forgotten, as most odors are never forgotten. This Summer, in modern households of many windows and fresh air and sunshine, was the first to enable these forms of life to get a foothold. Especially those homes in suburban sections of many trees, suffered if many books were kept in open cases. Scores of heavy volumes, some of them for no mildew was found on volumes in them.

The sufferers, if such they can be called (since no permanent damage is done, apparently) invariably were in the open cases which are so much in the vogue nowadays. Air could get at 'em.

Mildews, in their various forms, are air-borne. They seem to seek out cloth and leather, especially of the sorts named, on which to land, but maybe that is only seeming—probably what they do is to land everywhere, but take hold only where conditions are suitable for them.

Vegetable fibers and leathers offer them the proper hold and probably sustenance.

STARS, MEN AND ATOMS

Notebook of Science Progress in Field, Laboratory and Study.

BY THOMAS R. HENRY.

The fantastic life of the pre-dawn age, long a blank in earth's history, is coming to light. Approximately 60,000,000 years ago the remote ancestors of most living things known today—flowering plants, birds and mammals—made their appearance on earth.

There was a great gap between them and the heyday of the great reptiles, the monster dinosaurs and their relatives. All these had disappeared before the beginning of the Eocene, or dawn, age of the geologists. It was as if Earth had been wiped clean for new and better forms of life.

New, bit by bit, paleontologists are filling in the hitherto blank pages between the dominant reptiles and creatures in whom can be discerned family resemblances to the dogs, cats, monkeys, horses, etc., of the present. They are reaching back into ten million vacant years during which Nature was experimenting with animal forms and ways of life. They are picking up the debris of these experiments—scattered teeth, a few ribs, leg bones and skulls. Out of these they are constructing an approximate picture of the old life which failed.

One of the most notable advances ever made in the knowledge of this Paleocene period has just been reported by Dr. George Gaylord Simpson of the American Museum of Natural History from material collected in the area of the Crazy Mountains in Central Montana over nearly a generation by Smithsonian Institution scientists. This was apparently about the center of a vast forested area in which "nature's experiments" tried and failed adequately to adjust themselves.

Among these bones Dr. Simpson finds creatures moving in the direction of monkeys, rodents, bears, and hoofed creatures. They didn't make the grade, but they showed the way. None of them, it is probable, can be considered directly ancestral to living animals, but these arose out of the same welter of evolutionary experiment from closely allied, less specialized lines. Some of them, for example, may have looked and acted somewhat like bears. There was a place for bears in the world and life inevitably flows into every vacant niche. These creatures were unable to fill the niche and later on arose animals better qualified for the place.

In the earliest strata of the Crazy Mountain formation are found fossil fragments of an order of mammals altogether different from anything known on earth today, or for the last 50,000,000 years. These are the "multituberculates," so called from the peculiarity of their teeth. In the preceding geological period they constituted the most abundant type of mammal life. In the Paleocene they are already on the way out, and

rise to suggestions that the New Deal party and its administration have been slipping. The President started a counter drive against his opponents in his Constitution day address last week. He is going across the country, starting tomorrow, to carry on his campaign.

Today President Roosevelt and his newly appointed Justice of the Supreme Court, Mr. Black, are separated by the Atlantic Ocean. When Black returns to Washington for the opening of the Supreme Court term October 4, they will be separated by a considerable portion of the continent. Some day, however, they will both be in Washington. What passes between them at that time will be interesting, if it is ever known.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

BY FREDERIC J. HASKIN.

A reader can get the answer to any question of fact by writing The Evening Star Information Bureau, Frederic J. Haskin, director, Washington, D. C. Please enclose stamp for reply.

Q. How much food and water does the average person use in a day?—T. M. A. He consumes four pounds of food, three pounds of water and thirty-five pounds of air.

Q. How many officers and men can the airplane carriers Lexington and Saratoga carry?—L. F. B. A. The Lexington and Saratoga each has quarters available for 2,300 officers and men. During peace time these aircraft carriers usually carry about 85 per cent of their full complement of officers and men.

Q. What is Earl Sande, the famous Jockey, doing at present?—E. J. A. He is a trainer for the stables of Col. Maxwell Howard and is raising a few stock horses of his own.

Q. Who will play Jiggs in the motion picture "Bringing Up Father"?—M. T. A. George McManus, creator of this famous comic strip, is to be cast as Jiggs.

Q. What is meant by the Stakhanovite system in Soviet Russia?—F. K. A. It is a scheme for speeding up production by better arrangement of tools, raw materials and working time. Since wages are paid by piece work, fast, clever workers make a great deal more than slow, dull workers.

Q. Does the American Newspaper Guild publish a paper?—C. H. A. The official organ of the guild is the Guild Reporter, published weekly.

Q. How did Starved Rock on the Illinois River get its name?—R. T. A. The story runs that the Illini Indians starved to death on this rock when besieged there by the Iroquois. The rock is a cylindrical mass of sandstone about 100 feet high, with about a half-acre of wooded land on its summit.

Q. What percentage of the cigarette output is manufactured by the Big Four companies?—W. H. A. The four largest cigarette companies produce 83 per cent of the country's output.

Q. What is done in large steel mills to keep the workers from having heat prostration?—H. L. W. A. In most of the large steel mills salt and dextrose tablets are provided for the workers. Excessive perspiring causes a loss of salt in the blood and the salt-dextrose tablet acts as a restorative and prevents prostration.

Q. Where was wall paper first manufactured in the United States?—W. H. M. A. The first wall paper factory was established in 1790 by John B. Howell at Albany, N. Y.

Q. What was the Walking Purchase?—L. F. B. A. In 1682 William Penn purchased of the Delaware Indians a tract of land in the present counties of Bucks and Northampton, Pa. Penn and a party of Indians started on a walk beginning at the mouth of Neshaminy Creek. After walking a day and a half he concluded that it was as much land as he wanted and a deed was given to the lands at that point. In 1737, after Penn's death, the tract was increased by a party of expert walkers to a point 70 miles in the interior.

Q. Did Salome marry?—E. J. A. She married Philip the Tetrarch and afterward Aristobolus, one of the numerous descendants of Herod, ruler of Lesser Armenia.

Q. Where are Salvation Army officers trained?—W. H. A. Officers in the United States are trained at four schools, situated in New York, Atlanta, Chicago and San Francisco.

Q. How can homemade tomato juice be kept a bright red?—H. B. A. Use stainless steel knives and avoid utensils of copper, brass and iron. Select bright red, firm tomatoes and avoid boiling. Cook one or two gallons at a time by simmering until softened. Put through a fine sieve, reheat at once and bottle. Add salt, unless preparing juice for infant or invalid.

Q. What is the seating capacity of Madison Square Garden?—J. T. A. The seating capacity for boxing events is 18,451, and the largest attendance at any boxing show was approximately 21,000. This also represents the largest assembly for any event.

Q. What is spontaneous combustion?—M. M. S. A. Spontaneous combustion is fire resulting from heat produced as a result of the combination of oxygen with other substances. Rags, cotton waste, newspapers, straw and many similar materials give off heat of sufficient amounts to reach the kindling point of the materials, which burst into flame. Papers and magazines stored in a hot attic may result in spontaneous combustion.

Q. Is Louella Parsons, the movie columnist, married?—W. F. A. She is the wife of Dr. Harry W. Martin, a Hollywood physician.

Q. Does Indian corn grow wild anywhere?—G. C. A. No wild or uncultivated form of Indian corn is known.

Q. Who wrote the song "The Good Old Summertime"?—I. M. A. It was written by Honey Boy Evans, the famous minstrel.

Q. Where will the National Safety Council Convention be held this year?—F. H. A. It will meet in Kansas City, Mo., October 11-15. About 10,000 delegates are expected. Traffic, industrial and home accident problems will be thoroughly considered.

A Rhyme at Twilight

By Gertrude Brooke Hamilton.

Unstable. As lightly as a swallow Southward flies So did you go; No echo in the clear light of your eyes Of my heart—three.

So little of love's possible demise Did your heart know; As surely as the tides wash out to sea A drifting leaf So surely your light love will shatter'd be.

On some far reef; And 'twill suffer by Gethsemane Alone with grief.

Dangerous Fragments.

From the Burlington Hawkeye Gazette. Japan. A fragment that when you go about ruthlessly breaking up China, some of the fragments are likely to cut you.

Cash and Credit.

From the Bridgeport Times-Star. In these days and times it's hard to get credit where credit is due, and practically impossible to get it where cash is due.