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EDITORIALS

Current Comment

LATEST MODE OF CHRISTENING BATTLESHIPS

When a new warship is launched by the United States Navy, the time-honored custom is, amid the cheers of the gathered thousands of spectators, the crash of a bottle of champagne over the bow by some appropriate and beautiful lady.

But when a destroyer was launched at San Francisco last week, Mrs. Sullivan, the sponsor, after throwing the champagne as a matter of tradition, really christened the ship with her tears.

Mrs. Sullivan is the mother of five sons who died aboard the cruiser Juneau which was lost in the battle of Guadalcanal. The new ship was named "The Sullivans" who went down gloriously with the Juneau.

The Associated Press account is as follows:

"They enlisted together on Jan. 3, 1942; trained together aboard the (cruiser) Juneau, fought together, and when their ship was lost, they were together at the end", said Rear Admiral Clark H. Woodward.

It was then, on the launching platform, amid much navy gold braid, that Mum Sullivan's tears began to flow. And Genevieve, sister of the five Waterloo, Ia., sailor heroes, cried, too. There was nothing Thomas E. Sullivan, husband and father of the clan, could do about it except squeeze Mum's hand.

"The ships of our navy are built with sweat and toil," said Admiral Woodward, speaking to the Sullivans and to the 5,000 workmen and their families.

"They are launched with anticipation and pride, fought with coolness and with courage, and when lost—ours go down with honor and with glory," he said.

So perished the cruiser Juneau last November during the battle of Guadalcanal. Among the crew who manned her were five brothers—George Thomas Sullivan, Francis Henry Sullivan, Joseph Eugene Sullivan, Madison Abel Sullivan and Albert Leo Sullivan."

Admiral Woodward said it was the boys' special request that they sail together on the same ship, and when he told how they died together, Mum Sullivan lost the composure she had shown during the tour she and her husband have been making to the nation's shipyards and war plants to urge increased production.

She was so unstrung she had to miss the banquet staged in the family's honor at one of the city's big downtown hotels.

TO THE RESCUE—CHICKEN, PIG AND COW

It makes no difference whereof the blitz comes, whether from suddenly metamorphosed citizenry alarmed over tightening and encroaching draft regulations, or what not.

What we are interested in is food, and with delightful pride we see the chicken, the pig and the cow marching to the rescue. Never before has "essential industry" so profusely blossomed.

The prowling wolf may as well slink back from the door, we shall not starve with so much fried chicken, ham and eggs, butter and milk on the cuisine for the months ahead.

HOLDING THE INFLATION LINE

President Roosevelt has been the friend of the farmer and the laboring man. He has been especially wideawake to the interests of the farmers and during his administration farm produce has sold high, placing the farmer in the strongest position possibly in the history of the government.

But when the President vetoes the Bankhead farm bill, he will doubtless incur severe censure and criticism from several classes of farmers.

It may possibly be that as between farming, labor and business, adjustments are not yet exactly equitable or fair to the farmer in some instances. We do not know about that.

But we do believe that the President has acted wisely in his veto of the Bankhead bill. It is known that under the present conditions of war the country stands on the rim of a most dangerous inflation.

Everybody knows the colossal threat of inflation—how if you start increasing the income of one class, you must continue up the dangerous spiral. There will be no end to the cries for help.

Give Mr. Farmer more, and Labor will say, give me more; then industry says, give me more and so on.

It is simply not the time now to begin equitable adjustments.

The nation needs every effort and every thought turned to the work ahead of winning the war.

THE ARCHANGEL OF MERCY

"I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care."

We have heard of a man who refused to give to the Red Cross.

It is inconceivable that in the human cosmos an intelligent being should exist so lost to the ideals of the Christian Bible that he could withhold assistance from the greatest agency in the world to bring relief and consolation to the sick, the suffering, the dying.

On every field of battle on all the war fronts of the world, in the wake of fire, storm, pestilence or flood, there you will always see the Red flag waving—symbol of practical help—its officers, doctors, nurses, working, day and night in the heat or cold, in the storm or flood, under bombs, under the raking fire of death and destruction.

The Red Cross is not a money-making system. Its head, one of the great business men of America, a man who is able to command a fabulous price for his service, directs without money and without price.

The boy, far from home, a prisoner, sick, wounded, disconsolate, heartbroken, finds in the Red Cross a never-failing friend who sees to getting his letters sent home, sees that he gets his home mail, sees that mother or friends back home get the message of hope and cheer.

If there is an agency inspired and ordained direct from the Master, it is the great Red Cross that is everywhere in its power, its beauty, its mercy and sympathy.

WHAT SHALL WE DO ABOUT THE FOREST FIRES?

Dangerous forest fires have raged in different sections of the county this week, fanned by high winds.

Two of these fires threatened Danbury seriously for awhile, one to the south, the other to the north.

It is learned that each of these vicious conflagrations was started by persons well known among the people.

Whether a flame is started maliciously or through careless ignorance, the effect is the same on property-holders.

The law requires that before you set out a fire, you must notify adjoining landowners.

The persons who started these fires notified nobody. The people who owned farm homesteads, tobacco barns, etc., on adjoining lands were not notified, but were left alone to take care of themselves.

Many hundred acres of valuable timber was destroyed. A number of tobacco barns were burned. Many people had to go out and fight the flames to save homes and other property. At Danbury watchers stayed up all night on guard.

It is time the grand juries took notice of these dangerous and destructive fires that occur regularly every spring throughout the county. In the Reporter of March 25 the District Game warden impressed on the people the constant menace from forest fires which he said, burned over 5,300 acres of forest land in Stokes county last year, representing a loss of over \$18,000.

A suit for damages lies against any person who through either ignorance or carelessness puts out fire which damages his neighbor. Any person who maliciously or carelessly puts out fire in the forest, is subject to a term on the roads at hard labor.

Let the legislature tighten up on this most important matter in the life of the rural communities, and let the grand juries make investigations followed by indictments and rigid enforcement of the law.

A NOBLE RIDDANCE

The Ruml tax plan met the same fate that the Rommel fight plan is about to receive in Africa.

When the British 8th army, the Americans and the French catapult the "Desert Fox" into the Mediterranean they will do the suffering public about as much relief as old man Bob Doughton has done already by placing the skids under this crazy tax scheme.

One of the leading commentators remarked that nobody this side of Einstein could understand the Ruml income tax monstrosity. None of the congressmen knew what it was all about.

The present income tax blank is headache enough, God knows. Let congressmen evolve a fair and less complicated system, which will bear equally on every citizen.