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WHAT'S GOING ON

NEWS REVIEW OF CURRENT EVENTS

Wall of Water Carries Hundreds to Death in California.

A TREMENDOUS wall of water turned loose into San Francisco canyon when the giant St. Francis dam burst under pressure of 12,000,000 gallons of water, carried more than 400 sleeping residents of the narrow valley to death.

The great concrete retaining wall, 185 feet high, built less than two years ago to impound water for the city of Los Angeles, gave way without warning, releasing the flood upon the sleeping inhabitants of the picturesque valley.

Everything was swept away—human beings, houses, cabins, workmen's tents, orchards and live stock. Of the estimated 500 persons who were in the narrow canyon and lowlands below at the time the dam gave way, only a few more than a hundred have been accounted for.

Property damage is estimated at from \$10,000,000 to \$30,000,000. Some city officials of Los Angeles declared a preliminary examination indicated the break had been caused as the result of an earth movement or some external force. Passing motorists and valley residents declared sleeping around the buttress might have been the cause.

The canyon bottom and valley were swept clear of all signs of civilization for several miles. In the silt deposit, which in some cases was 30 feet deep, remained the uncounted bodies of the victims, houses, live stock and other ruins.

SUDDEN shifting of a side of Mount Serrat, located in the center of the city of Santos, state of Sao Paulo, Brazil, crashed thousands of tons of earth and rocks without warning onto a section of that place, and left a dead and dying toll of more than 200. Houses and buildings in the path of the slide were crumpled and buried, their occupants apparently not discerning the impending disaster until it was too late to escape the huge avalanche.

Mount Serrat, with a moderately high peak, is located practically in the center of Santos, Brazil's principal coffee port, with residences and business buildings spread around it on three sides.

THE United States senate published the report on conditions in the bituminous fields of Pennsylvania by the subcommittee which the senate sent into that area on an investigation that lasted five days.

The report declared the conditions to be dangerous to public order and deplorable as to morals, housing, sanitation, and general living conditions.

It was unfavorable to the methods of most of the operators and it praised "the splendid courage" of the women folk of the striking miners in the face of "privations which make the mothers' lot always the hardest to bear."

Legislation by congress was recommended for the correction of chaos in the industry which the investigators said, "generally is not in a prosperous condition in this country."

"We most respectfully urge," the senators concluded, "that the investigation by the whole interstate commerce committee of the senate be searching and severe in every detail, looking forward to some solution by legislation that will put the great coal industry of America on a reasonably prosperous basis."

Engineers Working on Flood-Control Plans

Undeterred by an apparently cool reception by the house and senate flood committees, Carroll L. Riker, retired engineer, is constructing a model of the plan of flood control of the Mississippi valley which he presented orally to the two committees several weeks ago.

The basement of the senate office building at the capitol is the scene of the model building activity, and when

itself of the humiliating stigma" placed upon it by acceptance of Sinclair's campaign contribution.

The letter suggested that Butler would have only to make the appeal and thousands of honest Republicans would willingly contribute "from one dollar up to any reasonable sum" in order that the money advanced to the party's war chest by Sinclair out of the same fund be used to pay Albert B. Fall, former secretary of the interior, for the Teapot Dome naval oil reserve might be returned.

THE White-Norris constitutional amendment to abolish "lame duck" sessions of congress, and change the Presidential inaugural date was rejected by the house. The vote was 200 to 157, with two members answering present. This was 36 votes less than the two-thirds necessary for approval of constitutional amendments.

The amendment sought to change the meeting date of congress from March 4 to January 4. This would have abolished the "lame duck" sessions of congress, or those in which sit members who were defeated at earlier elections. To conform with this change, the resolution proposed to have the President take office on January 24, instead of March 4.

SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY Mellon informed the senate Teapot Dome committee that he received \$50,000 of the \$260,000 of Liberty bonds which Harry F. Sinclair advanced to cover part of the deficit of the Republican national committee in 1923, but that he had refused to retain the bonds in exchange for a like contribution.

The treasury secretary disclosed that the bonds had been sent to him by Will H. Hays, former chairman of the Republican committee, and that, when Hays subsequently called on him to explain his purpose, he had declined to keep them as suggested. He added that he had returned the bonds to Hays and shortly thereafter made a contribution in the same amount from his own funds.

A FEVERISH day on the New York stock exchange March 9 saw the sale of 3,706,500 shares, General Motors being principally involved. The market closed with General Motors at 161. The following day the market was checked at 156, but General Motors had regained more than a point at the close. Several things caused the orgy of speculation: A decrease of \$26,000,000 in brokers' loans, removing the likelihood of the Federal Reserve bank board immediately raising the discount rate; a widespread feeling that General Motors will be able to compete successfully with the new Ford, and the news that the Managers' Security company, owned by General Motors executives, had bought 200,000 shares of stock, reflecting the confidence of the executives in the continued prosperity of the concern.

THE coal industry held attention during the week as the senate's committee continued its investigation. John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, testified that in his belief laws should be passed to permit the closing of uneconomic mines, to prevent railroads from exploiting mines by their insistence upon cheap coal, and to curb the use of injunctions in labor disputes. W. G. Warden, head of the Pittsburgh Coal company, attacked the union on the witness stand. He said he believed in democracy in government but in a "benevolent despotism" for business. An attorney for the union miners charged that the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ were planning a report to "whitewash" the operators of blame in the present strike and its consequences.

RODMAN WANAMAKER of New York and Philadelphia died March 9. He was reported to be the most heavily insured man in the United States. Policies on his life totaled \$7,500,000.

He was one of the foremost merchants of the world. He inherited the widely known Wanamaker stores in New York, Philadelphia and Paris from his famous father, the late John Wanamaker. Long known as an aviation enthusiast, he gained his chief fame along that line by backing the

successful flight of Commander Richard E. Byrd to France last summer. At the time it was said he had spent \$500,000 on proposed transatlantic flights, about half of that amount being for the Byrd expedition.

AMERICAN LEGION officials are mobilizing their forces for what is heralded as the greatest peacetime offensive ever attempted in this country in the interest of legislation providing for the universal drafting of man power and the control of labor and industry in the event of another war.

Backed by Secretary of War Davis and many high army officials, the former service men of the nation will make their seventh effort since the war to convince congress and the American people that steps should be taken in peace time to guarantee the President the widest dictatorial powers in case of another national emergency.

A PROVISIONAL estimate by the census bureau placed the population of the United States as of July 1, 1923, at 120,013,000, an increase of 14 per cent over the 105,710,620 actual count on January 1, 1920. The next federal census will not be taken before 1930.

The new total was arrived at by estimating the increase since 1920 on the basis of the best available returns on births, deaths, immigration and emigration.

THE automobile industry is perturbed over the realization that it may be forced to pay a certain wheel-maker upward of \$500,000,000 for using wheels on automobiles. A patent granted to Edward P. Cowles, of Sparta, Mich., in 1914, on interchangeable wheels gives the manufacturer who today owns its license rights the authority to make this huge collection from the industry, in the opinion of many lawyers.

PLANS for breaking down all obstructions to American supervision of the Nicaraguan elections next October have been under preparation at the State department following conferences between Secretary of State Kellogg and Senator Borah (Rep., Idaho), chairman of the senate foreign relations committee.

American officials, it is asserted, are determined to carry out their pledge and give the Nicaraguan people a fair election. Opinions expressed indicate the administration is prepared to furnish such marine forces as are necessary.

FORMIDABLE naval preparations were announced in the Italian chamber of deputies by Admiral Siranni of the Italian admiralty. Italy now has under construction one billion four hundred million lire (\$73,920,000) worth of armed vessels, which include two 10,000-ton cruisers and twelve submarines, started under the 1924 program, the admiral revealed. All these will be in operation within two years. This year's program includes two new cruisers, four destroyers, and four submarines, he said.

JONATHAN DIXON MAXWELL, pioneer automobile manufacturer and one of the three men who built the machine now preserved in the Smithsonian institution, believed to have been the first automobile, is dead.

Mr. Maxwell, whose name was given to the Maxwell automobile originated by him and manufactured by the company of which he was president, was associated with Elmer Apperson and Elwood Haines in building the machine believed to have been the predecessor of the modern automobile.

AGAIN the attempted conquest of the western passage of the North Atlantic by aviation has failed and Capt. Walter Hinchcliffe and Miss Elsie Mackay, who set out from an English airfield for a flight to America, went down somewhere in the Atlantic. No trace of their airship has been found.

AN APPROPRIATION of more than \$1,000,000, to be used in reforestation of denuded areas and in other conservation activities, is asked in a bill introduced in the senate by McNary of Oregon.

something like 1,070 miles. On either side of the proposed channel there would be canals 250 feet wide and 70 feet deep, which would be used for drainage purposes.

The aged engineer contends that the system would reclaim thousands of acres of land for agricultural purposes. Dirt obtained in the course of digging the canals would be used to construct the channel levees, which would be 310 feet wide at the bottom, 70 feet high, and 100 feet across the top.

Some Sea Facts



Drifting icebergs mark out the Labrador Coast.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)
ALTHOUGH it may be true that the principal ship lanes of the ocean are almost as definitely traveled and marked as a Lincoln highway or a Long Island boulevard, our knowledge of the bounding main is only fragmentary.

To begin with, the area of the sea is about three times as large as that of the land. Although as long ago as 1904 the governments of the civilized world had got together some 25,000,000 observations of every kind and sort from the logs of merchantmen, warships, and government vessels, and although the results of a single expedition have filled over 50 massive quarto volumes, what we know about the sea is but the primer of the things it has to reveal.

The most impressive thing about the sea is its shallowness as compared with the size of the earth, and its depth as compared with the height of the land. If you were to take a globe six feet in diameter and excavate the deepest trench of the ocean thereon, it would be a bare pin scratch deep—about one-twentieth of an inch. And yet so profound are the depths of the sea that the bulk of the water in it is 15 times as great as the bulk of the land that rises above its waves. In its deepest trench the tallest mountain on the face of the globe could be buried and ships could still pass over the spot with a half mile of water under them.

The average depth of the ocean is more than two miles—about 12,480 feet, the oceanographers estimate. On the other hand, the average height of the land is less than half a mile—about 2,250 feet. How much further beneath the waves the sea bottom lies than the land crest above them is shown by the fact that while only 1 per cent of the land rises to an altitude of 12,000 feet, 46 per cent of the ocean's floor lies under more than 12,000 feet of water.

The relative height of the land surface and the sea bottom is about in keeping with their relative areas, there being 71 acres occupied by the sea for every 29 held by the land. If it were possible to drain off the upper 10,000 feet of the waters of the sea and to lay bare the floor that lies under it, the territory thus recovered, added to the land now above the sea, would give only a fifty-fifty division between land and water.

Broad Continental Shelf.
The oceans as we know them are larger than the true ocean basins. As a monument is always placed on a base, so the continents have broad under-sea bases upon which to rest. To the oceanographers there is a line known as the 100-fathom line, which largely parallels the shore line, but which is sometimes as much as several hundred miles out to sea. When that line is reached the bottom suddenly begins to slope down toward the abyssal depths.

The floor lying landward from this line is known as the continental shelf, and it is upon this broad shelf, with an aggregate area three times as large as that of the United States, that the continents are planted. By overflowing this vast area of slightly submerged territory, the oceans gather unto themselves 10,000,000 square miles of territory that in elevation belongs more to the land than to the sea.

As a matter of fact, the continental shelf lies in part under water and in part above, the part above being the alluvial plains of the continents. Where these plains are broad the shelf usually is broad, and where they are narrow the shelf is usually narrow. For instance, the plain on our Atlantic coast is broad, and there is a corresponding breadth to the continental shelf. On the Pacific coast the alluvial plain is very narrow, and the 100-fathom line is correspondingly close to shore.

From a practical standpoint, the part of the sea of most immediate interest to man is that which rests upon the continental shelf. Here are situated all the seaboard cities. Whenever the ocean lanes may meander up and down the briny deep, they begin on the continental shelf and end

there. But for that shelf there would be no bays or gulfs, no harbors and no havens, for the boundaries of the true ocean basins are infinitely more regular and less indented than the shorelines. Ocean-bound commerce would be vastly inconvenienced if it had to dispense with all the advantages that the continental shelf brings to it.

Sea Food an Important Question.

A matter that seems destined to occupy a larger place in oceanographic research is the question of sea food. The World war demonstrated how close is the margin between food production and food consumption, and how much more pressing the food question is destined to grow in the years of peace and racial expansion that lie ahead.

The oceans literally teem with food. The man who declared that humanity is a rice of herring-catchers might have overstated the case, but that the sea abounds in food fishes and fishes fit for food is well known. As soon as we begin to study the subject of ocean fisheries, however, we come up short against the fact that what we really know about the inhabitants of the sea is startlingly limited.

Another phase of oceanography that will demand and receive close attention in the years to come is the ocean currents. The effect of these great rivers of the sea upon the welfare of the human race is past imagination. It is said that the Gulf stream carries enough heat toward Europe every 24 hours to melt a mass of iron as large as Mount Washington.

Rear Admiral Pillsbury, describing this remarkable river of the sea, says that every hour there passes through the straits of Florida the enormous total of 90,000,000,000 tons of water, carrying enough salt to load many times over every ship that sails the main. Through these straits the stream is 40 miles wide.

In each of the four quarters of the globe there is a wonderful circulatory system—the heavy, cold waters of the polar seas rushing equatorward, and the light warm waters of tropic oceans sweeping back, giving a huge swirl not unlike the motion of water driven around the bottom of a basin by the hand.

Vessels and debris caught in these currents often play uncanny tricks. In 1905 the Stanley Dollar, an American freighter, went upon the rocks at the entrance to Yokohama bay. Her life-preservers were washed out as she lay upon the beach upon which she was run to prevent her sinking.

In 1911 two of her life-preservers were picked up on the shores of the Shetland Islands, north of Scotland. How they reached there is one of the puzzling questions that so often arise about the sea. Did they sweep up the Asiatic coast, through Behring strait, and then through the Northwest Passage and Baffin bay, and thence by Iceland to the Shetland Islands? Or did they, after floating through the Northwest Passage, get into the Polar current and sweep down the Atlantic to the point where that ocean river dives under the Gulf stream, to be picked up there by the latter current and carried to the Shetland Islands?

It has often been urged that the American Indian came to the shores of the New world an unwilling voyager on the bosom of the Japan current. Certain it is that all of these vast rivers of the ocean have played an incalculably important role in the affairs of the human race, and that a more exhaustive study of them than has been made holds many revelations in store.

One of the questions that is often asked is whether a ship, sinking in deep water, goes to the bottom, or whether she finds her level in some vertical depth-zone and drifts on forever. This question sprang into great prominence when the Titanic went down, and was asked frequently during the World war. The answer is, she goes directly to the bottom, else how could a dredge or a trawl be sent down five miles.

KATE RENDERED FIRST AID

(By D. J. Walsh.)

KATE ARUNDALE stood on the platform of the small station looking after the departing train from which she had just alighted. What a fool she had been to leave civilization—the safe comfortable civilization to which she had been accustomed all her life—to come West to marry her brother's friend, Aaron Ward. For, after all, what did she really know about Aaron Ward save that he was her brother's friend and partner in the big ranch? And as for her brother Joe, he was almost a stranger, too. Joe had left home for the West when Kate was sixteen, and had been home only once since, and that was last year when he came East to help settle up their father's estate. Joe was thirty-eight and had not married. While Aaron was twenty-six, two years older than Kate.

Joe Arundale had been a teacher in an Eastern college until he had developed some trouble with his lungs and had been advised by his physicians to seek the broad open spaces of the Western prairie. On the train going West Joe had fallen in with Aaron Ward and his mother, who were returning from the East where they had been to bury Aaron's father. A close friendship sprang up between the older man and the boy, and after Mrs. Ward's death, which occurred soon after, Joe bought a half interest in the ranch and the two men had lived together, now for several years.

Through Joe's influence Aaron and Kate had carried on a correspondence which had resulted in Aaron's going East to see Kate. A mutual liking had resulted from the visit, and thus this trip of Kate's which promised to end in marriage, or had until utter homesickness had overtaken her, and caused her to wish heartily she had not been so hasty in making this trip West. To add to her misery the train had been held up the night before and Kate had been obliged to give up her money and some precious keepsakes of jewelry which had belonged to her mother. Of course she had been no worse off than the other passengers had been, but the heartache, added to the long days on the train and the recent parting with old friends in her home town, had cast a shadow so deep that it seemed impossible for anything ever to lighten it.

As the train rushed on out of sight she turned expecting, of course, to find either her brother or Aaron waiting for her. But there was no one except the tall station agent who stood gravely regarding her, from under shaggy eyebrows.

"Left to get?" he inquired in a drowsy drawl.

Kate stared at him without understanding.

He gave her a friendly smile and spat at a lizard which was ambling across the platform out of the shade.

"There'll be some one along pretty soon. Joe told me you was coming. Like as not his pesky car had broke down. For myself I ain't got no use for cars; a horse always was and always will be safer to my notion. But come in. Don't stand out there trying to absorb all the sunshine. If you stay round here long you will find it can't be done."

Kate entered the small station and sank gratefully down on the long bench just inside the door. The shade was welcome after the blinding sunlight outside.

About an hour later the station agent came back from a final look out over the prairie and announced that "That tar bus of Joe's is coming." And a moment later Joe drove his car alongside the station platform. He rushed in and caught his sister in his arms. The greeting on his part was all that might be expected from a man hungry for the sight of some of his own people. But with Kate it was different; she was more reserved, for she was clinging desperately to her determination to return East as soon as she could decently get away.

"I had to come alone Kate," Joe said apologetically as they set forth. "The sheriff came for Aaron early this morning to go after cattle thieves. He had no choice in the matter but to go. We have been having altogether too much rustling round here lately and the ranchmen got together last week and determined to put a stop to it. I don't know when they will be back from the raid."

They jolted on in silence for some miles, each busy with his own thoughts.

There is a train leaves here at noon. I will see that you make it."

It was as if he had read her mind! Kate stared at her brother almost with unbelief.

"You are kind Joe," she murmured with trembling lips. "I'm sure no one could be kinder. Of course, I am acting outrageously, but—but, oh, I can't explain to you!"

"Don't try, sister," Joe said. "Just let it all go. Try to rest all you can until I get you to a place where you can really rest."

Joe, though apparently absorbed in his driving, was in reality going over and over his disappointment and trying in advance the heartache of Aaron when he had to tell the boy of Kate's decision.

Presently they came to the bank of a creek where cottonwoods grew. A swift turn brought a house in view, a long adobe building with cool looking porches and deep set windows peeping through vines.

Kate gasped.

"Why, Joe!" She stammered. "You never told me your home was anything like this! I had no idea—why, there are trees and flowers!"

"Adobe makes a mighty cool home," Joe answered, as he stopped the car and lifted his sister out. "But what does this mean?" he hastily added, as he caught sight of a long wagon to which were hitched a pair of mules which was tied to a tree in the yard.

Just then the door opened and a man came out of the house with his hat in his hand.

"We've been waiting for you, Joe," he said. "Thought you'd be getting back about now. We got in a brush with those rustlers down in Deep canyon and Aaron stopped a bullet. He's pretty badly shot up. We've sent for a doctor, but what he needs until the doctor gets here is somebody who knows how to clean a wound and stop the bleeding. Needless to say we got the rustlers and the sheriff is taking them into town."

Kate waited to hear no more. Aaron hurt and needing help changed the whole current of her thoughts. Forgotten for the time was her weariness. She entered the house, closely followed by her brother and the two men.

The next hour was one of the busiest of Kate's life. At sundown when the doctor came he found Aaron as comfortable as first aid could make him. He complimented Kate on her work and made no secret of the fact that had she not been on hand there would have been little use for his services. He seemed to take it for granted that Kate would continue to be the nurse and left directions for her to carry out.

A month later Aaron had so far recovered as to be practically out of danger and Joe and he could do very well alone. Joe took Kate aside and told her that if she wanted to return East he would see that the way was provided for her.

"And leave Aaron and you?" asked Kate in astonishment. "Why, I wouldn't think of such a thing. Why, Joe, I love you and the ranch and—"

But she got no further because Joe took her in his arms and led her to where Aaron was sitting dejectedly in the shade of the big cottonwood.

"Cheer up, lad," Joe said as Aaron looked up at their approach. "Kate has something to say which I think you will be glad to hear." Then he turned away and left the two alone together.

Old Standards of Time

Some of the Mohammedan tribes of India and of the Indo-Malayan peninsula, who are addicted to chewing the betel leaf, use that as an indication of the passing of time. The leaf, prepared with a dab of lime and a sprinkling of spices, takes about 20 minutes to chew to a pulp. And this is taken as a standard of the time by them. But one of the strangest methods of telling time is used sometimes by the Malays, who measure time by the drying of wet hair on a man's head.

Amber Beads Long Popular

The superstition which clings to the meaning of beads is of ancient origin. The custom of wearing an amber necklace was immensely common, and is not yet extinct among old women in England. The amber, when heated, sends forth an agreeable perfume. In olden times it was the present made by a mother to her daughter on her wedding eve.

An Exception

"Yes, sir, I take prizes at all the fairs on my sweet potatoes. They are the finest in the land, and I know how to raise them—"

"Do you mind shipping me 50 pounds of them for the winter?"

"Well, I might make an exception in your case, but I do dislike to cut one in two."

Gethsemane

The name of Gethsemane is derived from an Aramaic phrase which means oil press.