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He that passeth by and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.—Proverbs 26:17.

WAS THOREAU RIGHT?

It is hardly surprising that the celebration recently held at Concord, Mass., in honor of the 115th birthday anniversary of Henry David Thoreau did not attract much attention outside of his home state.

Only a small group attended the ceremonies, and news of the event received very little space in papers outside of Concord. And this, in spite of the fact that Thoreau ranks as one of the greatest thinkers and writers the nation has ever produced, is only natural; for Thoreau preached a doctrine which is not very popular in the United States today.

Thoreau, as you doubtless remember, went to a little pond in the woods near Walden, built a rude cabin there, and lived as a sort of hermit. He wanted to demonstrate that most of us spend our lives struggling to acquire things that really don't do us very much good when we get them. He lived the simple life and spent most of his time thinking and writing.

But the nation has come a long way from the simple life as Thoreau lived it. If America two decades before the Civil War was too much engrossed in a frantic effort to get non-essential things and perform non-essential deeds, what would you call it today? Thoreau's time was an era of placid leisure by comparison.

Thoreau never lived to see the era of mass production and mass distribution, of installment purchasing and high pressure selling, of speeding automobiles and blaring radios. Thoreau's own age found him a bit "queer", and we "moderns" have even less time for his strange philosophy.

Why? There were many advantages in his way of life. And in the past two or three years the American people have had ample cause to doubt if their high-speed society is really getting them anywhere. We are not quite as sure now, as we were three or four years ago, that the modern ultra-complex civilization is man's noblest achievement.

It is true that our national income has greatly increased since the time of Thoreau; our homes are infinitely finer and more convenient; our methods of transportation and communication have broadened our horizons and stimulated our minds; the common people are better informed and better educated.

But are we any happier than the people who lived more than a century ago? Our greater knowledge and larger wealth bring with them also greater problems. The higher we climb, the greater the danger of falling. Some men are advancing the theory that we are on the verge of destroying our civilization because of our inability to solve the complicated questions which face us.

Yet we are doubtless safe in asserting that men will not turn back. Only an occasional Thoreau can be satisfied to separate himself from his fellow men and live in primitive simplicity. The rest of us will continue in the fascinating race, struggling to attain wealth and luxury and fame and influence. For in most men lives an unquenchable desire to attain, to possess, to excel, and to rule.

TYPHOID MARY

To most of us, "Typhoid Mary" is just a name out of medical history. It was a little bit surprising, the other day, to read that the woman on whom a generation of medics have fastened that name is still alive, an inmate of a cottage of North Brother Island, New York City.

Typhoid Mary has been there more than 17 years. She is in perfect health and she has committed no crime, but she is under detention and she probably will be to the end of her days.

She works in the laboratories of a city hospital on the island, takes all her meals by herself in her little cottage, and while she is not strictly a prisoner she is never allowed to get very far from the watchful eye of the city health department. Now and then she is permitted to go into the city for an afternoon, but she always returns in the evening.

There is something unspeakably tragic about this woman's case. Mary Mallon—that is her real name—has the misfortune to carry the germs of typhoid fever in her system, and although she has never had the disease herself at least 57 cases of it, several of them fatal, have been traced to her.

To permit her to have her liberty would be to loose a certain, devastating source of infection upon everyone with whom she came in contact. So she must live in a cottage on an island off Manhattan, a virtual prisoner, cut off from the freedom that makes life worth living. Was there ever a woman much more unfortunate?

This case, somehow, seems to symbolize the way in which the modern world has erected restrictions on individual liberty for the sake of the common good. Mary Mallon is the victim, not of wilful injustice, but of the order of society which must, now and then, sacrifice one for the sake of many.

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams



Other Papers Say:

CREDIT FOR THE UP-TURN

Press reports say that some Republican leaders are trying to link improvement in business with President Hoover's campaign for reelection, attempting to establish the fact that the chief executive is responsible for the present upward trend.

These leaders should go slowly in this enterprise. For them to assert that the president is justified in taking the entire credit for the present business improvement might lay him open to the suspicion that he had something to do with causing the depression.

The fact of the matter is that President Hoover was not responsible for the hard times of the past two years. It is equally true that he is not entitled to all the credit for curing them.

The depression was the result of the mistake which everybody had been making from the beginning of the World War to 1929. International bankers, domestic bankers, heads of industrial concerns, economists and the entire public, high, low, rich and poor, Republicans and Democrats, all of them had a hand in creating the condition which caused the 1929 debacle.

Each one has his responsibility in the matter and for any one or all of them to attempt to place the blame on the president is not good sportsmanship.

However, in a limited way the president is responsible for the present improvement in conditions. To the extent which the reconstruction and relief measures of the administration are contributing to it, Mr. Hoover is entitled to credit. But so far as remedying fundamental conditions is concerned, Mr. Hoover should not claim credit for this has not been accomplished yet.

Mr. Hoover's reconstruction program is acting on the business world exactly as a priming of water acts on a leaky pump. It is hastening the flow of normal business just as the priming hastens the flow of water to the top of the well. It is speeding up the recovery of business in the hope that the speeding up process will set in motion the laws of economics that are necessary to sustained business prosperity. To this extent Mr. Hoover is entitled to credit for bringing back good times.

Out here on the Pacific coast we can understand how this priming of the pump is working out. The country-wide appropriated many millions of dollars for highway construction purposes to give unemployed families employment. This program will send 60,000 men into highway camps and will set in motion the wheels of factories which supply goods to contractors.

And throughout the nation, banking houses are putting into circulation new money for the accommodation of their patrons, railroads have been able to preserve their credit, both of which are necessary to quicken the return of prosperity.

America spent a dozen hectic years gambling with destiny. Her people indulged in a money-making orgy and a spending frenzy. They hypothesized the future for the glories and pleasures of the present; and when the future arrived it foreclosed on its mortgages.

Nobody alone is responsible for this condition. And nobody, who had the ear of the multitude, foresaw the consequence of the golden, material era. The few economists who hoisted the danger signals were disregarded and scoffed at.

The result has been painful, but it is evident that the era of rehabilitation is almost over. If President Hoover's relief program has been of virtue in speeding up recovery, he is entitled to credit for it. But he has not cured the fundamental cause of our national distress. Only time, which measures the swing of economic laws, can do that.—Albany Democrat-Herald.

Now under way at Los Angeles might well be dedicated.

Here, as in few other corners of the world, is the opportunity for the cementing of friendships that can bring a clearer understanding to the participants and through them to their nations. Here is the opportunity for men and women from all parts of the world to learn that between themselves and their fellowman there is only the difference of national lines and the physical characteristics that reside in varying parts of the world have brought.

Meeting on an equal basis in an event where the test is in the mind and body and not in the name of the country from which they come. The athletes will be overlooking a duty to their nations, to the world, and least of all to themselves, if they do not make friends with other competitors.

Good far beyond figuring in dollars and cents will result if the thought of friendship for the sake of a better understanding is not overlooked. The United States has offered itself as a generous host to the cream of the world's athletes. It would be too bad if that cream were not churned through contact to a butter that could be spread, figuratively, to make this world a little better eating.—Walla Walla Bulletin.

Not Very Speedy
The first railway trains in England and this country ran very slowly. Coal trains in England, for a time, moved at the rate of three and three-quarters miles per hour. The first American locomotive used for coal hauling was the Stourbridge Lion, which moved at a speed of ten miles per hour.

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In Washington

By Herbert Plummer
WASHINGTON — Return of that burly and now gray-haired chap, George Akerson, to the political scene—as eastern publicity director for the Hoover campaign—somehow seems to be just one of those things that were bound to happen.

Most Washington newsmen and political observers never quite became accustomed to his absence in and around the White House. His relationship with Hoover had its beginning when the president made up his mind definitely to seek the Republican nomination.

At least that's what everybody thought when George quit newspaper work back in 1925 to become a member of Hoover's personal office staff in the department of commerce.

He was regarded from the start essentially as a political press representative.

HIS 'SON' TO HOOVER
But there are other reasons, perhaps more personal, why Akerson has forsaken his desk as a motion picture executive to do publicity again for President Hoover. There has been an unusual intimate side to the relationship through the years of these two men.

It was Akerson, as much as any one, who made "the Chief" known to the world. He always talked of "the Chief" wherever he went. Everybody knows the president's dislike for those little human stories of his sayings and doings so valuable for publicity purposes.

But he did much to make Hoover understand in the days that he was with him as his secretary.

To the president, he was never "George" or "Akerson." Always it was "Son." And when he left the White House he went with the assurance of both the president and Mrs. Hoover that they would ever regard him as "Son"—a member of the family.

Perhaps this, more than any other one thing, prompted him to return to the firing line to battle for "the Chief" once more.

Spread His Gifts
He is being revealed as a political opportunist, seeking goodwill where it would do him the most good. Investigations of the financial wreck which he left, shows that he gave money to several Swedish parties and contributed also to political treasuries in other countries where he had interests.

But here in his homeland, the liberal party, which for four years has held the balance of power, seems to have been recipient of the real political sympathies of Kreuger.

A year ago he handed 50,000 crowns, then equivalent to \$12,500, to Carl Gustav Ekman, present prime minister and leader of the liberals. This was done while Kreuger still enjoyed public respect and confidence and there is no question but that it was, politically, an ethical gift.

Ekman has returned the money voluntarily to the Kreuger administrators, announcing that the former match king made the contribution on his personal initiative and without asking any favor.

This action has been interpreted as a move to force other similarly benefited parties to come out into the open. At any rate Ekman's frank tactics have rather minimized Kreuger as a campaign issue.

Politicians who, ordinarily, might have been violent in their denunciations, have been mentioning Kreuger with considerable tact. There is rather general agreement that the financier's true political convictions were overshadowed by his desire for untrammelled progress in his business projects.

In Stockholm he had many friends among newspapermen and the press did much to gild his name. He held a majority interest in a press bureau which transmitted news of Sweden to all parts of the world and investigation of his affairs has shown that he was thoroughly alive to the value of modern publicity.

That he was a thorough political opportunist was revealed by the files of the Stockholm Dabblad, a newspaper which he owned until it was absorbed by the Stockholm Tidningen while he was in control. His hired writers flattered with all parties, criticizing only mildly and patting each on the back in turn.

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Premier Repays Gift to Party By Match King

By Elmer W. Peterson
STOCKHOLM (AP)—The ghost of Ivar Kreuger, suicide match king, is stalking through the political campaign of Sweden as the country prepares to elect a new second chamber of the riksdag, or national parliament.

The role which the spectacular international financier played in the politics of his home country is just beginning to be understood.

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