

THE FICTION CORNER

STRICTLY BUSINESS

By ROBERT C. BLACKMON

THE finest sermon I ever heard ended and the benediction came straight from the heart of the broad-shouldered figure in the pulpit. The stirring voice of the big organ filled the church and the congregation began to leave.

Harry Thatcher and I were surrounded by sober, thoughtful people as we went to the car. He drove out toward the lake.

"Don," Thatcher said abruptly after he got a cigar started. We were entering the lake drive. "There are three million, five hundred and sixty thousand, four hundred and eighty letters in the Bible."

"I suppose so." I almost dropped my cigarette. His talking about the Book took me by surprise. His interest was financial news, exclusively.

"There are seven hundred and seventy-three thousand, seven hundred and forty-six words in its thirty-one thousand, one hundred and seventy-three verses."

"Sure," I looked at him, wondering.

His gray eyes were half closed, his broad face grave. One could see why he was called "Bull-dog" Thatcher. He had a reputation of going after business, wherever it was, and getting it.

"Shortly after the war ended, a young man named Phillip Crasor came into my club one evening. Thatcher settled himself more comfortably in the broad front seat of the car, one big hand on the wheel rim. "He had been a pilot. I don't know how many missions, but enough. Star end at the university before that. All around athlete. He had been mentioned as a possible Olympic chance. Folks had a little money."

The car rolled with almost no noise. I said nothing. This wasn't the Harry Thatcher I'd known. I'd dropped in on him last night since I was in town for a few days, and he'd insisted upon my going to church with him this morning. Thatcher was not a church man, so far as I knew. I waited.

"Phillip had got some cockeyed ideas in the army," Thatcher went on. "Some radical talk. He started griping about youngsters in the army getting killed while the big-income businessmen stayed home safe. My income runs up a little." He couldn't conceal a note of pride. "He looked at me when he said it and I thought he was making it personal. I told him big-income men were worth what they got and he said they were a lot of stuffed fools. I got sore. I told him he couldn't handle a \$50,000 job for a month, much less a year."

Thatcher coughed a little, apologetically. "I was a captain in the first world war. Infantry. Shrapnel." His hand moved to his right side. "They wouldn't take me the last time."

He straightened. Breeze from the lake swept our smoke from the car. "Phillip Crasor said he had \$5,000 that said he could handle any \$50,000 job for 12 months. Inherited the money from an aunt, I believe. Anyway, he said for me to put up or shut up. The fellows in the club laughed, and I—well, I lost my temper. I called him at ten to one, betting 50,000 against his five that he couldn't handle the job. I was to name the job. It wasn't to be impossible, or require technical skill neither of us had. It was foolish, but neither of us would back down. It was a bet and I couldn't call it off. Betting is strictly business with me. If I win I collect, and if I lose I pay off. Strictly business."

If a man can't look at it like that, he has no business betting."

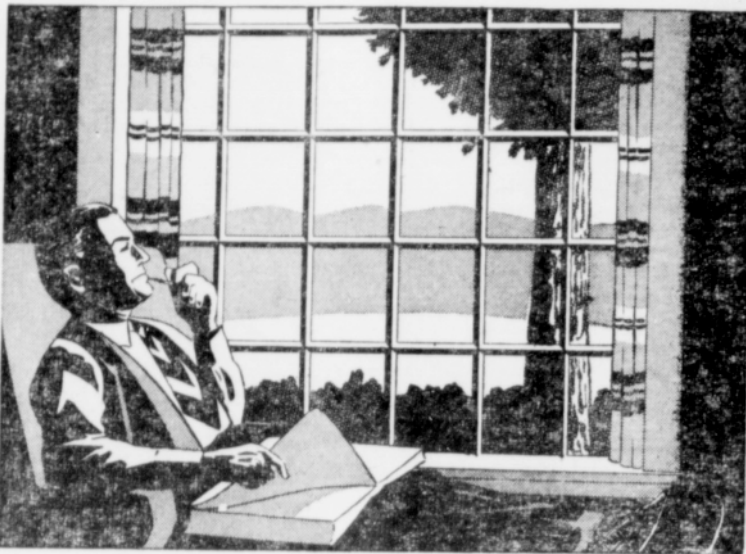
He tooled the big car around a curve. Sunlight was on the lake, a moving pattern of glinting water under a cloud splashed sky.

"The club was in an uproar, with men betting each other we'd both back out, or go on with it. I went over to the big bookcase at the other end of the room to think it out."

"I saw the Bible in the bookcase and remembered my mother telling me that the Book was good to read when you didn't know what to do. I didn't know what to do."

"I took the Bible and saw in the back where it had so many letters and words and all that, and it gave me an idea. When I was in school I couldn't spell."

"The teacher used to make me write missed words on the black-



My man cabled me that Phillip Crasor had locked himself in the cottage and wouldn't let anyone in.

board a couple of hundred times. I wrote about 20 words a minute, writing carefully. I figured I could write perhaps 30 words a minute, fast. That meant about 15,000 words in a full day of writing. At that rate, it would take 50 days to complete a handwritten copy of the Bible. Ten good, clear, handwritten copies would therefore take about 500 days, and the bet was for a year."

Thatcher laughed softly, remembering. "I realized that this was an ideal job for the purpose. It required no technical skill neither of us had, and there was a good chance that Phillip Crasor couldn't do it. I didn't want to lose \$50,000 any more than he wanted to lose the five. Phillip hadn't stuck at anything since he came out of the army, and I figured he'd drop out within a few weeks at the most. Then, I'd return his money and teach him a lesson he wouldn't forget about betting. And there was a very good chance that, after he learned what the job was to be, he'd drop the whole thing and agree to call the bet off. That would have been fine with me. I couldn't back down as long as Phillip wanted to go on, of course. The men at the club never would have forgotten it, and it would have hurt me in a business way. I went back to the others."

He nursed his cigar for a few moments. "Phillip Crasor exploded when he learned what the job was to be. I didn't know it, but his handwriting was awful. He thought I was ribbing him. The men in the club were having the time of their lives. A well-known lawyer drew up a contract and both of us signed it. Phillip Crasor wouldn't back down and I couldn't. I was to furnish the

place and the materials to do the job, and I was to be the judge of whether the copies produced were acceptable or not. If we had too much argument we could each choose a friend and they would choose a third party to settle the argument. There wasn't anything left for me to do but go through with it. I was going to each Phillip Crasor a lesson, anyway."

My forgotten cigarette burned my fingers and I tossed it from the car.

"I turned over a small cottage down on the lake to Phillip Crasor, stocked it with a Bible, paper, pens, ink and blotter—and told him to go to work. I left a man there to see that he didn't get outside help. It was strictly business with me. I had \$50,000 at stake."

"Phillip Crasor was going to produce 10 perfectly legible handwritten copies of the Bible, as the contract provided, or he would lose the bet."

"I didn't get back for a week or two, and Phillip had spoiled a lot of paper but produced nothing acceptable. He wanted to fight, but I told him to read the contract and

it was time for him to put up or shut up. I thought he would burst. The club was betting he'd last about another week. I did not think he'd go that long."

Thatcher looked out over the lake, then his eyes came back to the drive before us.

"Business suddenly took me to France and Italy and I stayed there for months." He coughed again, apologetically. "All wars are not won on the battlefield, and all soldiers do not wear uniforms, you know. Anyway, I was gone over nine months. My man cabled me that Phillip Crasor had locked himself in the cottage and wouldn't let anyone in. The year was almost up when I got back home. It had about 20 days to run. I hurried down to the cottage."

Thatcher flicked ashes from the cigar.

"My man said Phillip Crasor had been gone for a week. The 10 handwritten copies of the Bible were on a table in the cottage, all perfectly legible. On top of one pile was a letter to me from Phillip Crasor. I have that letter home now, in my Bible. He said he wouldn't take the \$50,000 and the bet was off. I paid, though, to the church we attended this morning. When a man loses, he should pay. It's strictly business. If I'd won—"

"But what about Phillip Crasor?" I held another forgotten cigarette in my hand.

"Oh. He preached that sermon you heard this morning."

LET'S TALK ABOUT YOU

—BY CHARLES B. ROTH—

GIVE YOURSELF TO A CHAIR

A friend of the late William James, greatest psychologist of his day, asked the noted man if he would mind giving a few rules for the improvement of personality.

"One rule I will give you," responded Dr. James, "a simple rule—but so important. The rule is this: Learn to give yourself up to a chair at least once each day."

Mystified, the inquirer asked what Dr. James meant when he said "give yourself up to a chair."

"Practice conscious relaxation," he was told. "Relax every day. Relaxation, particularly the ease and restfulness associated with utter relaxation, is one of the best aids I know in developing a charming personality."

How often one sees these futile run-arounds, men and women who are busy from morning till night, who never relax, who dash from one thing to another, who fidget and fume, who talk rapidly, who burn up energy and tire themselves and everyone else out by their fruitless display of waste motion. And how rarely one finds the composed, relaxed personality of power.

Dr. James' advice was, of course, purely physical—all you had to do was to give yourself up to the chair, relax utterly, let your body sag where it would. But there is always a subtle and marked relationship between mind and body. And the purpose of his counsel was to let your mental moods take their tone from your physical department. "What mental mood can you expect if you are always physically tense?" he inquired.



PRESIDENTIAL TIMBER

The race to be Mister Harassment or the Worrying Man, otherwise known as President of the United States, is on. Everybody is coming into the ring at the drop of a hat, so to speak. The stewards may have to divide it into two heats to prevent overcrowding and piling up in the stretch.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur is willing to go to the post. He is quite a man. George Washington threw a dollar across the Rappahannock but MacArthur threw a brass hat across the Pacific ocean.

General MacArthur offers himself to the Republicans if they insist and it sounds a little like a reiteration of his famous statement, "I shall return." Anybody who can wind up ruling Japan after Corregidor is not to be discounted no matter how long or difficult the road.

President Truman made the announcement that he would like four years more of trials and tribulations the same day MacArthur's word came from Tokyo. In the last couple of years Harry has been through more fighting than Douglas.

Messrs. Dewey, Taft, Stassen, Vandenberg and other GOP hopefuls took the entry of General MacArthur with a show of minimum concern but no race is ever made any easier by traffic congestion at the post.

General Ike, the Abilene Bearcat, announced that he would not be a candidate and added that he did not see anything in the situation which required a military man to make a general headquarters of the White House. Plainly MacArthur's reply to this is, "Sez you!"

Democratic politicians are insisting that if they could get Truman to step out and get Ike to ride the donkey it wouldn't make any difference if the Republicans ran MacArthur, Doolittle, Bradley, Spatz, Nimitz and Halsey all on one ticket.

Could it come to pass that, with General MacArthur seeing an excuse for a military man camping on the Potomac, General Eisenhower might be prevailed upon to change his mind? We shall see what we shall see, as the fellow said as he looked into the wrong end of a telescope. But we hope the campaign will be recognizable as a political contest and not a major military event.

Elmer Twitchell is close to a fortune. He is thinking of signing up to supply the United Nations with loopholes. The demand for smaller ones is especially high.

Special Delivery

Dear Uncle Sam:

This is a follow up to my recent letter asking if you didn't think it time you snapped out of that self-destructive trance in the drug-store window and started acting as if you were hep to the fact that Kremlin workers for your liquidation are just about the most efficient, wideawake, high-powered 24-hours-a-day shift organization in the land.

Sure, the people are asleep at the switch. Sure, they are hard to arouse. Yeah, I know 85 per cent of all Americans are so busy playing pinball machines, writing limericks for radio prizes, applauding the wrong people in newsreels and trying to get a new sedan that the 15 per cent hard at work to Sovietize America are having it easy.

What we need are demonstrations in every town and city for the preservation of America, and in 'em there should be the spirit of the old-time Fourth of July meetings, with the brass bands playing "Yankee Doodle" and the eyes of the people lighted up with gratitude for the great blessing of living in the greatest country on earth.

Americans are good joiners and good organizers. Once aroused they are tough babies and nobody's fools. How about a national campaign to get them as hard-working, alert and vigorous in preserving the country as the Moscow agents are for feeding it to the crows? I'm just asking.

Yours still wondering,
Elmer.

CAN YOU REMEMBER—

Away back when a man wasn't afraid to make more money?

The shoe industry predicts a drop from \$1 to \$3 in the price of shoes this year. Oh for the days when we could afford them on both feet!

Truman Says He Will Run. Headline.

Might be a good idea to develop the hook slide, too.

Eamon de Valera was in New York and the city, of course, gave him the green light



By INEZ GERHARD

THE blessed show—that's what Irene Beasley and her staff call her CBS "Grand Slam," because right from the beginning listeners whose questions have won them a \$100 bond, as well as various other prizes, have written her to say that the money came at just the right time. Sometimes the same thing has happened to studio participants. The idea for the show came to Irene in her sister's kitchen up in Connecticut. The sister wanted a radio show in which listeners like herself could participate. A few days later Irene obligingly thought up "Grand Slam." Don't miss visiting it if you're in New York, and be sure to meet Irene!

When Irene Dunne sings an old Norwegian cradle song to her sick daughter in "I Remember Mama" you wonder why she doesn't sing in every picture she makes. You also wonder why Hollywood doesn't give



IRENE DUNNE

us more such pictures as "I Remember Mama"—simple, true to life, making you laugh, tugging at your heartstrings, and done with fine direction and a superb cast.

Tom Moore of "Ladies Be Seated" is convinced that women are distrustful by nature. When he gives \$6 to each of two contestants at the start of his quiz game, "Famous Faces," they nearly always count the money!

"Warming up" a studio audience before a comedy radio show goes on the air is quite an art, but Bob Hope is an expert at it. However, to make sure of appreciation, Bob sees to it that Les Brown's orchestra members know nothing of the gags until they hear the actual broadcast. That gives him 20 listeners who catch even Hope's fastest sallies, and the audience laughs with them.

Humphrey Bogart made his stage debut on February 27, 1923, in a play called "Swiftly." Same day, same year, Edward G. Robinson made his, in "The Bright Shaw." On February 27, 1897, Lionel Barrymore began his theatrical career. All this was divulged one day when the three were working in "Key Largo," at Warner Bros. The year, 1948. And the date, of course, February 27.

"Crisis in Italy," the new March of Time film, is a "must." It brings us the truth about the rise of communism in Italy, presents conditions in that country far more vividly than newspapers or radio reporting possibly can.

Ten-year-old Norma Jean Nillon, "Cookie" on the CBS "Blondie" show, is a veteran actress. She became a professional five years ago, when she played her first dramatic role, a small part on Arch Oboler's "Free World Theater."

Loretta Young's two recent starting appearances on "Screen Guild Players" within a month marked the 10th and 11th times she has been on the program. She is topped only by Robert Young and Herbert Marshall, each with 12.

Odds and Ends . . . LeRoy Prinz had a nice chore for "One Sunday Afternoon"—teaching two horses to dance together . . . All Dennis Morgan had to do that day was crank an antique car, but he broke a small bone in his wrist while doing it . . . Dan Seymour, one of the cinema's fatter, and better, menaces, has an odd hobby—odd for him, that is—he raises parakeets . . . Jim Davis used some of the money from his first top line screen role, opposite Bette Davis, in "Winter Meeting," to buy a home in San Fernando valley for his parents . . . George Brent is permanent master of ceremonies for Mutual's "Leave It to the Girls."

After Glenn Ford finished his role in Columbia's "The Man From Colorado" he shaved off his sideburns—and then was asked to grow a mustache for "The Mating of Miles."

Sidney Miller, one of Hollywood's most versatile actors, had played practically every sort of role but a dog, until he appeared on ABC's "Lassie Show." He played "Spooky," handling the dog's dialog; Lassie did the barking.

Party Apron Has Gay Applique



THIS handsome bib apron is such easy sewing, looks so pretty for your hostess duties. This appliqued pansy pocket in yellow and brown or purple and lavender adds a nice accent. Use gingham with eyelet trim, gingham or percale.

To obtain complete cutting pattern, pansy applique pattern, finishing instructions for the Pansy Pocket Apron (Pattern No. 5387) sizes 14, 16 and 18 included. Send 20 cents in coin, Your Name, Address and Pattern Number.

Due to an unusually large demand and current conditions, slightly more time is required in filling orders for a few of the most popular patterns.

Send your order to:
SEWING CIRCLE NEEDLEWORK
530 South Wells St. Chicago 7, Ill.
Enclose 20 cents for Pattern.
No. _____
Name _____
Address _____

REDUCING? HERE'S A HELPFUL TIP

Are you slim enough to wear the new styles? Remember, no matter what you pay, "new look" fashions aren't flattering if you're overweight.

If you're reducing now—or plan to—you'll find the booklet, "Kellogg's Weight Control Plan," helpful. It gives 3 special sets of scientifically balanced menus for every meal, every day of the week—and insurance-company weight tables for each type of body frame. These menus include KELLOGG'S ALL-BRAN which contains vital whole-grain protective food elements—needed whether you diet or not. This booklet is FREE—just write Kellogg Co., Dept. N, Battle Creek, Mich.

NEWS that makes folks sleep all night!

Thousands now sleep undisturbed because of the news that their being awakened at night after night might be from bladder irritation, not the kidneys. Let's hope so! That's a condition Foley Pills usually allay within 24 hours. Since bladder irritation is so prevalent and Foley Pills so potent, Foley Pills must benefit you within 24 hours or DOUBLE YOUR MONEY BACK. Make 24-hour test. Get Foley Pills from drug-gist. Full satisfaction or DOUBLE YOUR MONEY BACK.



LOOK FOR THE LEAF ON THE PACKAGE

Relieves Distress of MONTHLY FEMALE WEAKNESS

Also Helps Build Up Red Blood! Do female functional periodic disturbances make you suffer pain, feel so nervous, irritable—at such times? Then try Lydia E. Pinkham's TABLETS to relieve such symptoms. Pinkham's Tablets are also very effective to help build up red blood in simple anemia. Lydia E. Pinkham's TABLETS

Watch Your Kidneys!

Help Them Cleanse the Blood of Harmful Body Waste

Your kidneys are constantly filtering waste matter from the blood stream. But kidneys sometimes lag in their work—do not act as Nature intended—fail to remove impurities that, if retained, may poison the system and upset the whole body machinery. Symptoms may be nagging backache, persistent headache, attacks of dizziness, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes—a feeling of nervous anxiety and loss of pep and strength. Other signs of kidney or bladder disorder are sometimes burning, scanty or too frequent urination. There should be no doubt that prompt treatment is wiser than neglect. Use Doan's Pills. Doan's have been winning new friends for more than forty years. They have a nation-wide reputation. Are recommended by grateful people the country over. Ask your neighbor!

DOAN'S PILLS

Hope

Grace Noll Crowell

THIS would I hold more precious than fine gold,
This would I keep although all else be lost:

Hope in the heart, that precious, priceless thing,
Hope at any cost.

And God, if its fine luster should be dimmed,
If seemingly through grief it may be spent,
Help me to wait without too much despair,
Too great astonishment.

Let me be patient when my spirit lacks
Its high exuberance, its shining wealth;
Hope is a matter, often, God, I know
Of strength, of health.

Help me to wait until my strength returns,
Help me to climb each difficult high slope,
Always within my heart some golden gleam,
Some quenchless spark of hope.

