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Wednesday, May, 1, 1935.

A Questionable Proposal.

The hill introduced by Senator Lewis, making it possible for the President to extend and make permanent various functions now exercised by the Secretary of the Interior, contains proposals that should receive careful scrutiny. The important issue is not whether the hard-worked head of the Interior Department needs a \$10,000-a-year assistant. Rather it concerns the possible consequences of reorganizing the department along the lines of this bill.

For example, Mr. Ickes thinks that the PWA, an independent temporary organization, should become part of the regular departmental set-up. This suggestion alone is one of great moment and calls for searching legislative analysis. The decision certainly should not be left to executive discretion, since inclusion of the PWA within a regular department would go far toward assuring its permanent existence.

It is questionable whether the Federal Government should maintain an organization of the type of the PWA after the present emergency has passed. Certainly, the scope of its activities will be greatly contracted and for that reason alone it will be subject to radical modification. Similarly, the desire of Secretary Ickes to attach the Oil Administration-of which he is the head-to the Department of the Interior is a dubious proposal. So far the efforts of the administrator to regulate interstate shipments of oil have been far from successful, and there is a question as to whether the present temporary law provides a proper permanent solution of the control problem in this field.

These are only a few of the issues raised by a seemingly innocuous proposal to convert the Department of the Interior into a Conservation and Works Department. The very name signifies an intention to embrace new fields of activity, some temporary and others of a permanent nature, carried on at present under the supervision of other departmental heads. If there is to be a reallocation of duties and a reorganization of departments such as would be necessary to meet the wishes of Secretary Ickes, the changes should be plainly indicated in any legislative proposal coming before Congress.

The Shocking Emile.

Paris has remembered that "Germinal" Paris has been commemorating Emile Zola. The event is perhaps more interesting to the historian of fashions in morals than to the critic of literature.

Zola's strategy was surprise. Except for one or two such experiments as "Le Reve." all his troops were shock-troops. From the days of "L'Assommoir" and "La Terre," his success depended almost entirely upon his ability to startle the young and horrify the old. Age was easily horrified a halfcentury ago. The youth of the Eighties were startled by episodes which the youth of these Thirties would scarcely remark. Power Zola possessed, yet little save that one kind of power.

His was a talent inevitably fatal to itself. Unfortunately for the "daring" author who is "daring" and nothing more, the worlds onen to his conquest are relatively few, and his public reserts repetition. Zola had to he followed by at least three decades of romantic writing, had to wait for new readers to be born and grow up, before there came any demand for successors to his Naturalistic School-who would go it one better, or one worse.

The New Traffic Law.

The tragic accident in which Mrs. Sarah Bowerman, wife of Washington's popular public librarian, was struck down vesterday by an automobile out of control, once more emphasizes the need for eternal vigilance in the campaign to control Inefficient

The long-sought passage of the so-called safety responsibility bill for Washington represents a considerable advance. With the President's signature, the District will join the 21 States and eight Canadian provinces that have already adopted the bill. It is based on the theory that enforcement of traffic regulations must precede any satisfactory elimination of accidents. If statistics can be trusted. Washington may now look for some improvement in its traffic record. Last year, with a general increase of 16 per cent in automobile accidents throughout the country, of the seven States to show a decrease, six of them had adopted the safety re-monsibility bill.

Operators' licenses and registration cer-

drivers may be suspended on any one of three counts: driving while drunk, leaving to may a judgment in a traffic case within 30 days. The local enforcement will, of course, be routine. But approximately 25 per cent of District accidents involve out-oftown drivers. However, of these, two-Inasmuch as both these States already have cooperation from neighboring traffic authorities in promoting enforcement.

To the District traffic officials and the American Automobile Association who have sponsored this safety legislation, the community owes a vote of thanks.

Toward Bimetallism?

Representative Dies, of Texas, has found a silver lining to the dark clouds which to most people seem to be gathering around the Administration's silverbuying program. The consequent rise in silver prices has resulted in the disappearance from circulation of large amounts of silver coins in countries such as China and Mexico, with troubles ahead for another great silver-using nation-India. But Mr. Dies concludes that the final result of our erratic silver policy will be a world-wide bimetallic currency system at a 16 to 1 ratio. It would be interesting to know by what chain of reasoning this conclusion is reached.

Excepting China, no great nation uses silver as a standard of value, and the trend has been away from a metallic base in those countries that have been forced to abandon the gold standard. Moreover, whenever there is speculation regarding the outlook for an international monetary conference, the discussion deals with rehabilitation of the gold standard. The alternative most frequently recommended is reliance upon some form of managed currency, possibly tied to gold.

Certainly there is no gainsaying the strength of the arguments in favor of a speedy return to a stable world gold standard. The fluctuating exchanges, resultant exchange restrictions, interference with foreign trade, augmented unemployment and a whole train of accompanying evils are due to currency instability.

Nevertheless, our silver-purchase policy has strengthened the hands of those who argue that the time is not ripe for an international currency agreement. Even if the present silver policy is discontinued after the metal reaches \$1.29 per ounce, the irresponsibility with which Congress launched us upon a course that has increased existing world currency chaos will perpetuate fears of fresh experiments on

Countries operating upon a gold-standard basis, and silver-using nations compelled to use paper in place of the silver currency of which we have denuded them, can not be expected to fall in with the ideas of a few of our politicians. There is no evidence that other nations harbor the illusion that bimetallism at some particular ratio will meet the needs of the rest of the world, to say nothing of the United States.

Fighting Forest Fires.

Today the ordinary airplane flies 210 miles per hour-the distance of a city block in a second!

From his nerch a thousand feet above the treetons the airman scans the landscape for miles around. He sees behind the mountain, down into the deepest canyon. In one hour's flying this inspection covers 5,000 square miles on a clear day. Two airplane survey the largest forest reserve in the land on a three-hour flight

The pilot through his glass detects a distant tiny wisp of smoke. Some passing tourist in that canyon has tossed a cigarette stub into the leaves. In two minutes the airman is circling over the spot, his radio broadcasting its exact location, the extent of the fire, the nature of the adjoining timber, the nearest water, the best way to approach it.

The ground station would not discover this smoke for several hours. In fighting forest fires it is time that counts. Natura may take a century to replace the first hour's devastation,

The Nation's valuable timber is disappearing with alarming speed. One year's losses would put an adequate forest patrol into the air.

Col. H. H. Arnold several years ago commanded Cressy Field, California. He directed his Army pilots to take their flying exercises over the nearby national forest. This area was divided into checker-board squares on their maps. Each pilot made a daily flight over his square to radio down his discovery of incipient fires. Air headquarters telephoned the alarm to the ground stations in the forest. Often 24 hours were saved to the fire-fighters. Col. Arnold's idea was splendid, but such work did not belong to the Army Air Corps, and it was

As the Post-Impressionist has frequently pointed out in his Column, this modern implement again should be employed by the authority responsible for the preservation

stopped.

What, May Day Again!

May Day, it goes almost without saying, is not what it used to be. Even the customs usually associated with it are no 'onger to be found except in the dictionary, the Encyclopedia Britannica, and a few junior colleges. But in spite of the absence of village greens, bucolic lads and lassies, and even the pole itself, May Day has rolled around once more and some sort of recognition of it is expected.

An extensive search for information suitable for an editorial discloses only a few tificates of both local and out-of-town prosaic facts. Webster says this is "the fifth objects of public suspicion.

month of the year, containing 31 days." And that is most decidedly that. The Enthe scene of an accident illegally, or failure | cylcopedia Britannica does its best to loosen up on the subject, but it still sounds like the Encyclopedia Britannica, "All classes of the people were up with the dawn," says that august tome, "and went a-maying." "A-maying," to explain, meant chopping the thirds bear Virginia and Maryland licenses, , choicest tree of a nearby forest, dragging it to the village where it was stripped and adopted the bill, Washington can rely on full | decorated with flowers, and erecting it so that those so inclined could dance around it.

But those were the pre-shappe days of merric England. So far as can be learned from every available source, the tradition of May Day is now practically extinct. Industrialism has killed it on the village greens and dictatorships have stamped out its socialistic observance along with parliaments. In Russia there will be big parades, but even there the new Moscow subway probably seems more important. But there is still its designation as Child Health Day. Physical education classes will take advantage of the date to doff middy blouses and cut cheesecloth capers in formation. And in such weather surely any excuse for lively exercise is welcome.

Today, then, is May Day. Further than that the deponent saith not.

Fate Of The Nation.

The editors of The Nation must be busy with explanations these days. For the 70year-old weekly, long characterized by its militant liberalism, has been purchased by -may the gods bear witness-an international banker! Already the anvils of sareasm are ringing as Dic-Hards and Communists sharpen their little darts. But whatever jibes may be forthcoming. Maurice Wertheim, the purchaser, can turn them all. No better proof of liberalism could be conceived: he permits his banking hand on the right to know precisely what his publishing hand on the left is doing. and smiles the while.

While the development is not without its humorous aspect, it is significant as further evidence that the truly great man can flever he measured in terms of his social or economic environment. For Mr. Wertheim has been an unfettered thinker all the time he has been 'a successful banker, and advancing years have in no way sapped the independence of his mind.

He has been a director of The Nation for the last eleven years, during which period the editorial attitude has certainly not become more conservative. Moreover, he was a founder of the progressive Theater Guild and among his other directorships counts both industrial establishments and the New School of Social Research. Perhaps some part of his clear liberalism may now express itself through the broad-measure columns of the paper. Perhaps the magazine will now no longer feel compelled, for instance, to wax ecstatic over everything Russian merely because it is Russian.

The present excellent editorial board remains in full charge. Sontrol of The Nation, however, is to be vested in an independent foundation with a self-perpetuating board of directors. Mr. Wortheim, who will serve as a member of the board, presumably will provide the necessary working capital. Thus the continued publication of this journal of opinion is insured, for which the American public should be duly grateful. As part of the left-hand lens in the stereoscope through which the passing scene is made intelligible, it serves as a most valuable aid to proper perspective ...

Life's Little Ironies.

What was scheduled Sunday as the scason's swan song for the New York Philharmonic Orchestra turned out to be a sparrow scherzo instead. Disdaining even the great Toscanini's baton, the slightest movement of which is regarded as law when he is conducting, the sparrow, or "flutterer" as he is sometimes called, proceeded to live up to his nickname. The audience was thoroughly demoralized by the bird's indecision as to an appropriate resting place. Not even a chorus composed of such names as Elizabeth Rethberg and Giovanni Martinelli, was able to hold the people's

Toscanini, in following his own inclinations and ignoring certain traditions adhered to by his foreign predecessors, has made an enviable and unique record in this country. It is his custom to conduct without a score and usually this in itself is sufficient to command the most rapt audience But even the rarity of this accomplishment was forgotten in the antics of the commonest of all birds.

That a sparrow, with vocal ability wholly limited to an unpleasing, occasional cheep. should steal the stare from some of America's most famous human songbirds is but another of life's little jokes. It is doubtful if Toscanini, "wrapped in the solitude of his own originality," was aware that Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis" was playing second fiddle to one of nature's posts. At any rate, he was able to ignore the intruder, which was more than Amelia Earheart could do last week when what might have been another record-breaking flight was foiled by a more bug lodging in her eye,

Horse Sense. From the San Francisco Chronicle

It is agreeable occasionally to be able to ompliment a Legislature upon showing common sense and an opportunity now arises through the tabling of the bill proposing to require all school teachers and professors to take an oath of allegiance to the State and Federal Constitution.

Similar proposals have been hooted out of the Legislatures of several States and it is proper that the California Legislature should similarly dispose of a meaningless measure which, as a practical matter, is ballyhoo and a statutory insult. Some of the agitators in this respect would be well off if they could show as good a bill of health in the matters of intelligence and patriotism as can the educators they propose to single out as proper



Hard To Get Away From.

During the temporary absence of Mr. Elderman, The Post's cartoonist, a symposium of editorial reaction to current national and foreign affairs will be published from day to day in this space. The reprinted drawings will not necessarily represent our own viewpoint, but are selected as reflections of considered opinions on the passing scene. The editors of The Post wish to make full acknowledgment of the courtesy of their contemporaries in granting permission for this procedure.

Letters To The Editor

Favoring Japan's Proposal. To the Editor of The Post-Siri Both the Senate and the House have been considering measures which their authors hope will keep America out of the next war. One of these measures is designed to take profit out of war. Another one is meant to enforce American neutrality. Such proposals are, of course, commendable, but their authors frankly admit that when war sentiment runs high such wellintentioned measures might be repealed by Congress.

Why not accept the Japanese suggestion that the major navies of the world cut their respective strength in half? There should be some way to work out a definite naval program on the basis of that suggestion if the powers, particularly our own country, are really solicitous for world peace. The Japanese contention, as I understand it, is that all navies should be so reduced that none would be capable of engaging in aggressive operations in distant waters, and that all should be employed for the torial waters. It is difficult to see how any reasonable critic can object to such a proposal,

The late President Roosevelt said in one of his messages to Congress that "a strong and self-confident nation should be peculiarly careful not only of the rights but of the suscontibilities of its neighbors." These words should be taken to heart a this particular time when the nerves of nations seem to be or edge. There is no reason why we can not be friendly with Japan.

Japan, ever since her entrance into the society of nations through the good offices of our own country, has made unceasing efforts to adhere to the "good neighbor" principle in her dealings with us. One instance of this was her voluntary restriction of the immigration of her laboring class to our country.

The Japanese have long been rdent admirers of the United States. They have been earnest students of the West in all lines of activity, patterning their schools after ours, adopting our banking and industrial systems as well as the latest methods of sanitation and up-to-date knowledge of medicine. The United States has the respon sibility of maintaining this high in the esteem Should we cooperate with Japan in he naval question we would rise still higher in the Japanese esti-The time is ripe for a con-

structive move of this nature MARCIA CLARKE. Houston, Tex., April 13.

Reply To Mr. Lanier.

To the Editor of The Post-Sir: Re the reply of Alexander Sydney Lanier, in The Post of April 24, to the letter entitled "Share Croppers' Distress," by "American Reader:" It should be noted that when Mr. Lanier proceeds to describe conditions existing on this typical plantation, he begins by an attempt to gloss over the wretched conditions, so often exposed, which exist among share croppers in the South by saying, "While not denying, perhaps a few isolated cases of abuse."

What Mr. Lanier carefully conccals, and what we would like to know is, how much can the tenant save out of all the munificence from the landlord? Does he, or can he at the end of the year have

The Post welcomes letters from its readers. All communications must be signed with the writer's name and address. Upon publication initials or pen names will be used if requested. Letters are subject to condensation, and in no case should they exceed 250 words.

anything to show for his year's labor? Any money? Does the landlord compel him to buy his provisions from the plantation "com-missary?" If so, at what rate of increase over their cost in public stores? Why does not Mr. Lanier tell all this? He even states that the landlord

looks after the spiritual welfare of the tenants. This is generosity indeed. One wonders if this is religious advice from the landlord himself or by means of furnishing preachers. He states that with all this generosity "they are in many ways far better off than the land-lord." the identical language used by slave owners during slavery of the "ideal happy condition of the slave." One would like to know if the landlord would be willing per in view of the latter's better condition.

And now, timely enough, there appears in The Post of April 27, right on the heels of Mr. Lanier's denial, one from Madge Lorin in which she further deals with the wretched condition of the share croppers in the South, painting their condition far more deplorable than that depicted by the writer to whom Mr. Lanier takes exception. What has he to say to this? His letter seems a very lame attempt to gloss over real facts in the case. PRESLY HOLLIDAY.

Washington, April 27.

Recovery Proposals.

To the Editor of The Post-Sir: Granting the morale of the country is low, with a fifty-fifty break it can come back and be finer than ever before.

It should be embodied in the Constitution that not more than one-fourth representation be given one group, profession or class in our legislative halls, State and Nation-as example, one-fourth lawyers, one-fourth dirt farmers, onefourth hard-headed business mer and one-fourth miscellaneous. This would bring about a more uniform representation, give a balanced viewpoint and encourage more of our able lawyers, business and professional men and farmers to ente politics in order to serve their country.

Secondly, add up the average additional costs of plows, machinery and manufactured goods sold with in the United States above the world price and return it to the farmers in bounty. Cut out all red tape and let the farmer raise all he can and regain the world markets. This bounty will put farmers on a parity or equal footing with industry, as there is and can be no protection for cotton and wheat which must be sold at world prices Take off or reduce the processing tax if the textile group is not intelligent or efficient enough compete for world trade, and other groups likewise. The automobile industry is so efficient no protection is asked or given and it holds

the world trade. The time has arrived when we

must go forward as a Nation. When the above-mentioned things are accomplished, the wheels of industry will hum; we will become a happy, industrious and prosperous peoplea blessing and joy will be ours.

JOHN BELL HOOD.

Jonestown, Miss., April 27. Outmoded Protection.

To the Editor of The Post-Sic: I notice by the findings of the re-cent school bus tragedy at Rockville that the driver of the bus was held for carelessness and the railroad train crew released. The judge states that the driver showed negligence because of his failure to stop and he also states "Maybe I'm out of touch with the 'way people regard railroad crossings, but I feel that it is the duty of everybody to stop and see if a train is advancing."

Now that traffic is so great and speed considered a necessity, it would be quite a task for the traveling public to follow the rule as stated by the judge. The rail-roads, in order to keep themselves out of trouble, had laws passed that it was the duty of all before crossing railroads at grades to stop. ook and listen. These laws were put in force at the time of horse and buggy traffic and are not now when automobiles travel at the rate of 50 or 60 miles

or 100 miles an hour. Some other provision should be made to take care of traffic. Where there is a grade crossing there should be a watchman 24 hours a day whose duty it is to signal traffic at all times and not just when a train is approaching. It was claimed the engineer blew the whistle and the other devices for giving warning were all in good working order Automatic signals, ringing of bells and blowing of whistles are no longer a protection to these fastmoving transportation carriers and should not be depended on any WILLIAM J. GROVE. Lime Kiln, Md., April 27,

Note To Reviewer.

To the Editor of The Post-Sir: Permit me to correct the writer of Weekly Review in The Post, suggesting that the 41-year-old King Boris III is very much unmarried. He married the Princess Giovanna of Italy, third daughter of the King and Queen of Italy, at Assisi (Italy), October 25, 1930. However, I wish to say that the page is splendidly written and I read it every week with great in-

terest and pleasure. GEORGE GAZZERA. Washington, April 29.

Universal English.

English as a universal language has many champions. Perhaps the failure of all the artificial languages has something to do with it. There is no question that English is now widely spoken than French long the accepted language of diplomacy, while Latin, once the accepted language of scholars, is going rapidly into the discard.

But the case is not quite so simple as this. English is difficult to learn, and it lacks the lucidity of French. There are those, too, who would argue that a universal language is not desirable, but that facility in the use of other languages than one's own would be a more potent instrument of culture. There is something to be said for this contention.

(Philadelphia Inquirer.)

The Post Impressionist

Unmasking An Old Friend.

Post Office, Wednesday. MOVING in a general north-easterly direction, the Gulf Stream crosses the Atlantic Ocean, from the Gulf of Mexico to the southern part of the

British Isles, then flows along them,

You learned that at school, didn't

thus tempering their climate

Of course you did!

And you have never met an Englishman who didn't assume that this noble activity on the part of the Gulf Stream was proof positive of Heaven cherishing an especial tenderness for Great Britain?

Of course you haven't! Weil, the schoolbooks were all

And those boasting Britishers For French scientists have just

But let us break it to you zently. You have been fond and foolish. but you have been very human.

It is curious-and it is pathetichow most of us cling to at least one straw of faith in science.

Every man is warned, by what intellect man possesses, that there is no reasonable basis for such faith. Every man, in his own lifetime, hears Science proclaim some "New Truth" destructive to some old one—and then lives to hear Science repudiate this New Truth for a newer truth, refute today what resterday it would have died for, all the while subconsciously getting ready to jeer tomorrow at the Newer Truth which it promulgates

For ever so long, the doctors prescribed crushed toads for fever, diamond-dust for love. A generation ago. Science had us all descending from apes; today it doubts whether any of us descends from anything.

About the time of the World War, Freud reduced human emotions to **a** single emotion and a couple of dreams; this year, Dr. Jung, once Freud's warmest disciple, enlarges human emotions to a generous dozen and differentiates dreams until they have a good deal less significance than those of Pharaoh's household. Once, if you broke a leg, you ought to have all your teeth cut; now if you are losing every tooth in your head, you ought not to allow any to be extracted.

Truth is absolute, whatever else is relative. Ask Prof. Einstein.

* * * And yet every man clings desperately to some modicum of belief in

Science! Even the wisest men. Even the Post-Impressionist, He believed, until yesterday, in

the Gulf Stream. So you have company in your

misery. * * *

The French found out the fraud. The very London Times admits it: "Nothing is sadder, as life adances, than the exposure of one's friends." sighs that Times, realization, reluctantly and in the face of massive evidence, that they are humbugs. It is particularly been receiving tributes of gratitude for the kind deeds they were supposed to be doing. Now to join the ranks of the exposed comes one of our oldest friends.

"It is a myth, the story Englishmen love to tell to foreigners . . of how the Gulf Stream sees from afar the noble, but rather cold, British Isles and hurries to do some unostentatious warming. We are not in fact so favored. The Gulf Stream does not reach us."

To be sure, the Times suggests that the French scientists are envious. It says they may imply that the Gulf Stream, which admittedly does at least start on its mission of mercy to England, is tempted en route by the beauties of France, like any American tour-

But this base suggestion won't hold-water. The French scientists aver that the Gulf Stream never. in effect, gets anywhere-just fritters itself away in mid-Atlantic.

From Science the Times flies for consolation to reality. It recalls that England need not "take too much to heart the exposure of the Gulf Stream, because the benefits, such as they are, remain. Somebody is doing something to take the edge off England's northernness"-and anybody who wants to

may claim the credit. So "the chief annoyance" caused by the findings of the French savants will be among school-teachers. "If now it is geography's turn to 20, what certitudes are left, what subjects can be trusted to stay the same for a generation or so

Our own answer to this query is: 'No subjects-of Science.'

a schoolmaster's back is turned?'

But precisely therein we find our wn share of consolation: Up until this Year of Grace, ever

since Benjamin Franklin first wrote about the Gulf Stream, Science declared that the Gulf Stream crossed the Atlantic. Now Science says the Gulf Stream stops half-way. Therefore, Science will next year

discover that there isn't any Gulf Stream. And then, year after next, Science will discover that the Gulf Stream

does cross to England, after all.