

The Sun

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COMMENTS ON MEN AND THINGS

BY SPECTATOR

What is the matter with us? The newspapers tell us day by day of scares and alarms and crimes. Have we become so bad or so nervous that calm and repose are impossible? Or, is it that everything is now played up by the papers and radio commentators?

Almost every day I rejoice in my citizenship in South Carolina. Here we are far from the "madding crowd's ignoble strife," as Shakespeare says. But just as I feel the pride of my Carolina background—and present, and foreground, too—I hear something unwholesome about this State. We have no big bosses who can issue orders to their underlings, but we have developed a legislative condition which should be corrected. Without indulging in names we have such a state of affairs that an Administrative Board or Commission of the State will fail to act on public matters because a member of the Legislature passes the word that he wants the petition denied, or wishes such delay as may be prejudicial to the interest of a petitioner.

Much has been said of the evil of legislators practicing as

lawyers before the Boards and Commissions of the State. It is a bad practice because the legislator had undue influence since he may cast a vote for or against the officer or officers, if the choice be by the Legislature; or he may have something to do with the fixing of the pay of public officials. The men who prepared the Constitution thought they had made State officials including Judges, independent of the Legislature. They thought they had done that by stipulating that a salary might not be increased or reduced during the term for which the officer, or Judge, was elected. That was easily evaded in recent years by providing expense accounts and travel funds. Most of the State officials have been granted increases by subterfuge or legislative disregard for the Constitution. I do not say that they are overpaid; I am referring only to the method adopted for increasing the pay. Now, if the Legislative whim or favor may increase pay by subterfuge, it may just as easily reduce the pay. Do you imagine that the Legislature loses or gains in influence by pro-

ceeding as it does? Practicing law, as it is called, before the State Boards is one thing, and should be stopped, but passing the word in private to one's beneficiary on a Board or Commission is a practice which is not open and subject to public hearing. For example, if a legislator practices as a lawyer before a State body we can assume that the whole proceeding is a public record and open to public hearing and public inspection. But if one merely passes the word on the quiet, that is a practice which makes the State Government the plaything of the private instrumentality of someone acting in the dark. There are many rumors of that, with names and dates and places. We have full control of the Counties, by legislators by which the nod of the lawmaker is the royal sign of the consent or denial.

In local matters, the General Assembly bows to the Senator and Representatives of a County as though the so-called County delegation were a legislative body. Almost no County Supply Bill is passed which does not contain provisions in complete disregard of mandatory provisions of the State Constitution. Sometimes this may be due to ignorance of the Constitution, but one hesitates to suggest that any legislator is ignorant. If not a matter of ignorance, then what? Is it just indifference to the Constitution? Are they assuming that if no one challenges the act in Court it will be the law of the land? And that is true.

The greatest failure of our National and State Government is the wide-open break in our law.

What is the law? We, a people under a government of law, do not know what the law is; and the courts are frequently so far at sea that the law changes with the Judges.

If one would study our government, government throughout the United States, including the National government, he would wonder why we had not found how to have laws which are clear and beyond dispute. Haziness of the law, however, is not the reason for the State's ignoring the Constitution.

The most dangerous trend in America is not the attitude personified by Mr. Truman; or the weak spirit of Congress in playing me-too politics with the President; we expect politics in the Executive and Legislative branches of the Government—although a brand of politics of distinctly higher practice; but we did not expect the courts to play me-too politics with the President, as though the courts were merely a part of his Administration and bound to do his bidding. The attitude of the Federal judiciary is the most dangerous development in our land. You and I would like to

think that a man is a Judge because of his thorough grounding in the law, in the law, and because of his character and temperament, and because of his commonsense; and we find our free institutions without a champion when Courts merely echo the whims of a vote-seeking politician.

I happen to be a member of the Hoover Committee for the Reorganization of the Executive Departments of the National Government, though I am of no value to the undertaking. Even if a few millions were saved they would be like chicken-feed in comparison with the grandiose squandering advocated by the President and meekly authorized by the Congress. I can't shout with joy over the outlook, but I do find comfort in the achievements of business. Before me are five papers telling about business. One tells me that the American people are buying more things in cans. Our British friends have no cans; they put them in tin. You will recall the play on the word "can." An Englishman, looking over a field of tomatoes—also tomatoes and tomatoes—asked an American "What will you do with all those tomatoes?" The American said "We eat what we can, and what we can't we can."

This left our English brother a bit confused—we eat what we can, and what we can't, we can—so the American explained the word "can" in conserving. Our English friend enjoyed the play on the word can, and tried it out on a fellow Englishman in this style: "Those Johnnies across the water have a saying that they eat what the can and what they can't the tin."

Well, the article calls this "Tin Can Civilization" and says that there has been a 70% increase in tinned commodities in ten years. Everything from paint to prune juice and nut cakes can now be bought in tin or cans. Beer, dog food, cat food, potatoes, bread, cheese pastry, fresh milk, lemonade, cosmetics, marshmallow whip, whipped cream.

Florida packers say they will need three hundred million cans in 1950. California calling for sixty million cans. Pet foods now use a billion and a half cans. So my cats are members of a large company. About 210 plants make tin cans. Tin cans, by the way, are about 98% to 99% steel, with a thin coat of tin.

A big field for canned stuff will be the automatic machines. It is estimated that 35,000,000 cans of chocolate milk, tomato juice, apple juice, and other things, are sold by vending machines in a year.

The use of vending machines is increasing rapidly. One is being prepared to sell hot sandwiches.

In tin are our old friends salmon and sardines, while the

venders still depend on candy principally.

We are prone to think of Christmas as it was observed in the big houses of England and America, years ago. Great quantities of food and drink, snow and ice, the coming of friends and kindred, all mingled with a warmth of humanity and geniality. We have much of that today, much good living, rich eating, hearty fellowship, but the real meaning of the day must not be drowned in liquors nor forgotten in riotous indulgence of any kind. Some folk think the Christmas season, and especially Christmas eve, is a suitable time for a real debauch, heavy drinking. Can anyone conceive of a celebration more foreign to the occasion? A spirit of reverence, by all means, should signalize the coming of Him whom the Book calls Immanuel—God with us.

It is inconceivable that any person should care to enter the presence of Jehovah drunk. How, then, do we plan to drink ourselves into the spirit of Christmas? The spirit of Christmas, by all means, but not the spirits for Christmas!!

The Christmas story is a wondrously beautiful one, of the Son of God coming into the world as a baby—the great event at Bethlehem in Judea, in the stable. In the simplicity of it all we see goodness, greatness, graciousness—all without pomp or trappings of rank. Humility and simple living were enthroned that day; man was to see the personality of the Creator in the life and ministry of the Son.

Everyone has heard the sweet Christmas carol of the great preacher, Phillips Brooks: "O little town of Bethlehem." In recent years we hear it in every mechanical contrivance. In the first years we recall "The hopes and fears of all the years, are met in thee tonight." But the third verse is significant:

"How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in."

I am making this recording because of my engagement in Washington with the Hoover Committee.

Upon my return I'll tell you about the meeting unless something more interesting comes up.

Merry Christmas



For somehow, not only at Christmas, but
all the long year through,
The joy that you give to others is the
joy that comes back to you

Whitener Lumber Co., Inc.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

It's time for Christmas Carols, time for wreaths and holly, and time especially for us to wish that your Christmas this year be a jolly success.

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Sam Cook's Beer Parlor



Whitfield's Ready-to-Wear

ANNUAL SEASON OF GOOD WILL WELCOMED HERE!

Here's Our Greeting Card!

Merry Christmas

As you read the messages of Christmas throughout this issue, please accept ours with the true feeling of sincerity with which it is offered.

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