

# SEEN and HEARD around the NATIONAL CAPITAL

By Carter Field  
FAMOUS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT



Washington.—What amounts to a bad case of jitters over possible war and its effects on America, aggravating a business situation which is none too satisfactory, is obvious in administration circles, particularly in the Federal Reserve board.

This is the second reason for the recent action devaluing \$300,000,000 of the frozen gold. The effect desired to remedy both troubles was to insure continuance of low interest rates. Primarily, putting this huge amount of gold back in use, so to speak, was aimed at preventing the slide in government bond prices.

Government bonds have been selling at a price absurdly high—from an investor's standpoint—even with due allowance for their tax advantages. Moreover, the banks have entirely too large a proportion of their assets tied up in government securities. But just the same the government did not want to see a decline in bond prices. That would spell higher interest rates on future government financing.

But that secondary reason to make money cheaper for investment purposes in order to encourage expansions by existing business concerns and the development of new business, was also quite important.

Most experts in international affairs do not believe there will be a world war this year. They think the nations most likely to provoke such a war are not ready. But there is constantly in mind the danger that the situation may get out of hand.

Memory is still green about what happened to American business at first, when the war broke out in Europe in 1914. After a while business boomed, and the war babies in steel and munitions grew and bloomed. The price of sugar and cotton soared.

But all this was much later. The first reaction was such a crash on the stock market that it was necessary to shut it down and keep it closed for months. The price of cotton dropped until President Wilson himself was encouraging the "Buy a Bale of Cotton" movement.

### Take Precautions

Nobody knows just what would happen this time, should the crisis develop this year instead of 1938 or 1939. The year 1939, by the way, is preferred by most experts as the most likely time for the next world war. So the reserve system is just taking precautions, providing in advance the certainty of plenty of cheap money to cushion possible temporary drops in prices, not only of securities, but commodities.

This cushion, most experts figure, would be necessary for only a short time. Ways and means would be found by the belligerents to get needed supplies from America despite any and all obstacles, the neutrality law and the reluctance of this country to buy foreign bonds or extend war credits to the contrary notwithstanding.

Very confidentially, of course, officials admit that the neutrality law would not prevent United States manufacturers from selling airplanes, or tanks, or cotton, or copper to neutral countries from which they could quite simply be shipped to belligerents. But this would take time—that is, to get the new roads to the market in working condition. But the sort of trade that made Holland rich during the last war would certainly develop in some way or other.

All of which, however, does not reassure the people who seem to want to get rid of their securities so as to be ready to jump into something new under changed conditions, or perhaps just with an idea of playing safe. This attitude adds on to the desire of so many to hedge against inflation.

### Gets a Laugh

There are lots of chuckles in Washington, and especially in the State department, at James W. Gerard's new job. The idea of the wartime ambassador to Germany and Democratic war-chest fund provider figuring in a tourist agency strikes the average diplomat and the average political bigwig as sort of a comedown.

But the job is far from a joke. Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes does not think it is a joke. Neither do the railroad men from the West, nor the hotel men from the Rockies to the Pacific. They think "Jimmy" has what it takes to bring them some new business, and very high-class new business at that—suites instead of singles with baths in the hotels, drawing-rooms and compartments instead of tourist sleepers on the railroads.

For Gerard's job is to make desirable to his old friends in Germany and throughout Europe—and to their friends—and through the resulting publicity to many more—the attractions of Yellowstone, Yosemite, Glacier and Grand Canyon National parks, to mention just a few of the highlights. And of course any foreign tourist making this "big circle" would also visit San Francisco, and Seattle, and Portland, yes, and even Hollywood.

All of which means a lot more

money spent—money which otherwise would stay in Europe. It means a lot of food sold in the most profitable way.

But that's just the commercial aspect of his "joke job" that Gerard has undertaken.

It's a bromide in the West that the New Yorkers think anything west of the Hudson river is unimportant, save perhaps on election nights. "Out there" is just the provinces, from which one returns, when one has to go there at all, as speedily as possible.

But if that "west of the Hudson river" is changed to "west of the Mississippi" a lot of folks in this country might be included!

### An Eye-Opener

The late Charles F. Murphy, famed boss of Tammany Hall when that venerable institution amounted to a lot more than it does now, had plenty to say to friends when he returned from the Democratic national convention at San Francisco. He told friends he thought every American ought to make a trip to the Pacific coast, just to see what this country was really like.

When it comes to Europeans seeking to understand America, and usually writing a book about it after a few weeks' stay, the question becomes even more important. It sounds as if Gerard's job is just to sell the cultured Europeans, whom he got to know during his diplomatic service, the western scenery of America. Actually of course that is all he is appointed to do, because that is what the national park service is interested in doing.

But a visitor cannot see the Grand canyon, and Yellowstone, and Glacier and Yosemite without seeing a pretty good cross-section of the United States doing it. And he or she would get a very different slant on this country from that which is normally acquired by the average distinguished visitor on a lecture tour, rushing from lecture to reception to autographing stand in the big store's book section.

It may actually prove very important in future international relations!

### About Sugar

Sugar always has been political dynamite, is now, and probably always will be. Concern about the interests of the housewives and consumers generally has been the bunk, in the opinion of this writer and most observers, ever since sugar became an issue under the original protective tariff, with just one exception.

That exception was under the Underwood-Simmons tariff bill, passed immediately after Woodrow Wilson entered the White House, and which did not prove very satisfactory. It deprived the government of a revenue of about \$60,000,000 a year, which, in those days, was important money from the Treasury standpoint. For a time also it played hob with the Louisiana cane interests. Then along came the war and sugar prices began to soar regardless of any governmental policy.

From the progressive viewpoint, the worst tariff of all was that passed under President Hoover, in which the duty on sugar was fixed at two cents. It happens, however, that Americans were paying, during that period, just two cents above the world price. In short, the duty determined precisely the differential.

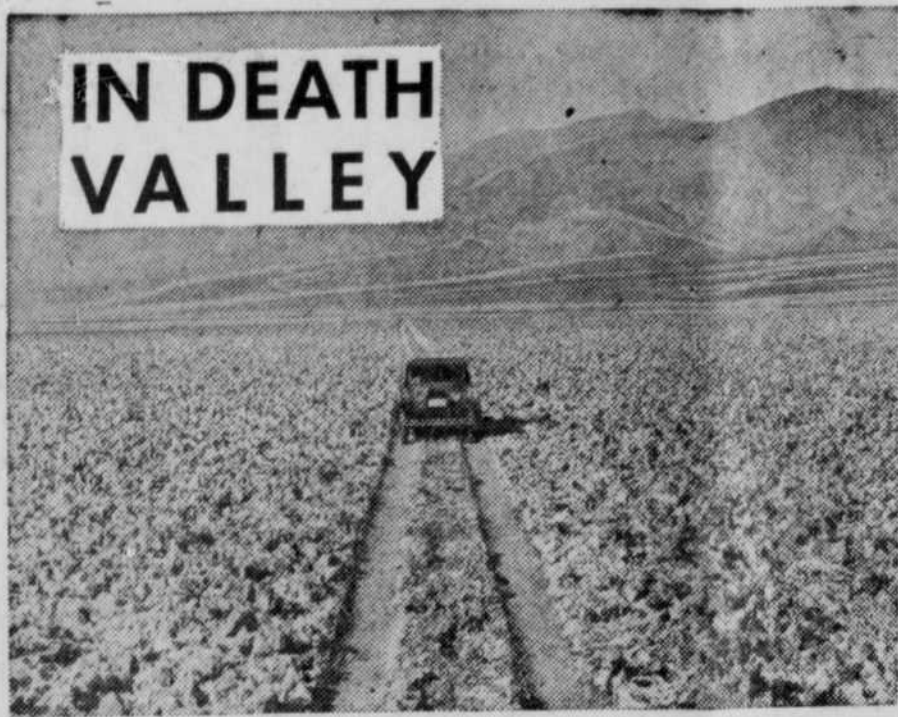
But under the quota system, which any economist or free trader will admit is much worse than the tariff system in practical workings, Americans were paying, around the first of this month, 2.38 cents a pound above the world price! So the consumer is getting it in the neck even worse than under the Hawley-Smoot tariff.

### Hits Consumer

Assuming this, it becomes interesting to discover just what they are doing to American consumers of sugar in the way of profiteering. According to computations following the formula approved by the United States District court for southern New York, the profits of the refiners during 1936 averaged seven cents on every hundred pounds of sugar. For the year 1935 the refiners' profit averaged six cents on every hundred pounds. And in 1934 the profits averaged five cents on every hundred pounds. The year 1933 was thrown out of line by some bad calculating on the part of the refiners as to advance buying under the quota system. Briefly, they were "caught short." They had sold sugar at a price in advance and then had to pay more for the raw sugar than they had calculated.

This profit seems rather unimportant to the housewives' standpoint, when one figures that the excise tax on sugar (on both domestic and imported) is one-half a cent a pound, ten times the 1935 refiners' profit. And sympathy with the consumer is rather strained when it is considered that the administration wanted this tax to be three-quarters of a cent a pound instead of half a cent!

© Bell Syndicate.—WNU Service.



## IN DEATH VALLEY

A Death Valley Road Through Rough Earth Formations.

### Once Dreaded American Desert Has Now Become the Playground of Man

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

NEWS that the Thirteen Colonies had become the United States didn't reach Pacific coast Spaniards till years later. Barriers of distance and desert were such that even after California joined the Union, in 1850, it still took weeks to get mail from Washington. No other state was ever so isolated.

Men hated the desert then and feared the horrors of death from thirst. Every trail across it was strewn with bones of men and oxen and abandoned wagons.

Now the desert is man's playground. Planes, trains and motors, of course, have robbed the desert of its terrors. Now idlers in shorts, brightly colored pajamas, or bathing suits sprawled about these desert pleasure resorts, as in Death valley, and fret if they can't get this or that favorite brand of imported mineral water, all within a stone's throw of where dying pioneers found not even a mouthful of alkali water!

The sting has been taken out of Death valley completely by modern transport. Much of it is now a national monument, and winter visitors swarm in over new roads, lured by its astounding physical geography.

You can imagine that here a giant smashed the world to bits, baked it, then split seas of paint over the colossal, silent ruin. Nature's emotions range from utmost fury to moods of restful calm.

Stand on Dante's View, a peak in the Black mountains which towers high above the floor of Death valley, and you can see over more than 150 miles of this weird, incomparable region.

Far to the west is Mount Whitney, highest peak in the United States, and below you is the lowest point in North America, 276 feet below sea level. And up the valley floor there stretches what looks like vast alkali swamps; but that is an illusion, for it is merely a coloring of the desert.

All Alone With a Chipmunk. "Do you live here all alone?" a traveler asked an old man who sat before an empty hotel in the historic ghost town of Ryan.

"Me and a chipmunk," he said. "My friend'll be out soon so you can see him. He always comes to eat at ten o'clock." And at ten he came!

Borax and a few other minerals first made Death valley a busy place. It was then that the famous 20-mule teams hauled the big freight wagons with a water-tank trailer, taking weeks on the long, rough round trip out to a railroad station on the Mojave desert.

Mining is abandoned now. The borax diggers found a richer, more convenient deposit near Kramer, on the Mojave desert, where they can bring up huge chunks of glistening, glassy borax, with a railway close at hand. So the long mule trains are no more; but you can still see the giant wagons standing along Furnace Creek Wash, where the tired, dusty mules were last unhitched. Beside these big wagons visitors pose now to be photographed. That is common-place reality; all about is unreality, illusion.

Save one or two tiny favored spots where water comes down from the canyons, Death valley knows no cultivation. Despite sightseeing buses and private motorcars that through its dusty trails, there is still something very significant in the warning signboards which tell how many miles it is to the next water.

Different, indeed, its destiny seems from that of other California deserts criss-crossed by man's irrigation ditches!

Once Arid Regions Now Gardens. Maps of barely 30 years ago bore the words "Colorado desert" across what is now Imperial county, with 60,000 people.

If the prehistoric monsters who left their tracks about the Salton sea could come back, they would find plenty to eat now, for this below-the-sea region has become the nation's hothouse.

Years ago a plant explorer for the United States Department of Agriculture brought some date suckers from Arabia, which were planted,

experimentally, at Indio, in the Coachella valley.

Today a huge industry has grown up and the groves there resemble those about Baghdad or Basra, in Iraq.

Much of the desert basin above the Salton sea, with its duck clubs and speedboat races, is still empty; here and there are date and other gardens of astounding fertility. Men must have felt the heat the day they gave such local place names as "Mecca," "Arabia," "Thermal," and "Biskra."

Planes from Los Angeles for Phoenix, Tucson and El Paso fly down this long, hot valley, entering from the north through San Geronimo pass. Grotesque tumbleweed, rolling over deserts in hard winds, looks like brown bears at full gallop.

Not far from San Geronimo pass, you may visit the site of one of many construction camps on the Colorado river aqueduct project with its miles of tunnels. A worker there once found a petrified egg about the size of a coconut.

Across the valley men dig the great hole that will carry water under the San Jacinto mountains. Like the Indians before them, local whites say that sometimes this mountain "growls." Geologists say it is a "young" mountain; that if there are growls, they may be earth tones from subterranean movements along earthquake faults.

### Earthquakes Now and Then.

Earthquakes occur here when one block of earth crust slips past another along an earth fracture. Several such faults extend from the Mojave desert to offshore islands.

One such slip caused the Long Beach earthquake of March 10, 1933. Mud and hot water squirted from cracks that opened in the ground. Many people say they saw a waving motion pass across the fields which set trees, houses, and water tanks to swaying, while up from the rocking earth came a deep-toned, roaring sound.

If a giant could seize the edge of this region, as you might grab the lid of a steamer trunk, and thus lift the top off southern California, you would see below it one of Nature's busiest workshops. Down here, in the dark, things go on which affect all that live up above in the sunshine.

Far into the earth, miles and miles deep and many leagues long, run the faults or fractures that figure in the quakes; but more important to man on top of the ground are the vast underground basins that hold water for his wells and other great natural tanks, from which for decades he has pumped that oil which, more than anything else, has put this region on a solid economic basis.

Since exciting early days, when pioneers bored and found oil in commercial quantities within the city limits of Los Angeles, its flow has increased, and southern California has become a financial and geographic center of a Titan industry.

### Oil Attracted Many Thousands.

As with the land booms, so in the days of oil excitement there came hordes of oil executives, technicians, drillers, rotary helpers, derrick men, tool-dressers, teamsters and truckmen, roustabouts, pipe liners, tank builders, refinery workers, and stock salesmen, adding their thousands to an already heterogeneous population in and around Los Angeles, the fields of Kern county, and the Kettleman hills. One well in Kettleman hills was bored in 1933 to a depth of 10,944 feet, a new record.

Odd, indeed, to visitors is the sight of oil derricks set out in the ocean, down the coast from Santa Barbara, which pump oil from below the sea. At the Rincon field a well has been bored which is more than half a mile from the mainland. The discovery that holes already very deep could be drilled even deeper and actually deflected to reach new sections of oil pools has given Huntington Beach a new boom.

From an airplane you look down on "tank farms," where oil is stored; clusters of white metal tanks appear like giant frosted cakes; roofs of still larger reservoirs, built like ponds, are protected by lightning rods. These, the roaring refineries, the long pipe lines, trains of oil cars, and tank steamers loading at the ports, are the outward and visible signs of this trade now operating under the oil conservation law.

## What Irvin S. Cobb Thinks about

Our National Bird.

LAS VEGAS, NEV.—Those folks back East who're agitating to make the turkey our national bird are late. Benjamin Franklin had the same notion 150 years ago.

Old Ben pointed out that the eagle was a robber and a tyrant and was the emblem of various European monarchies, whereas the turkey was not only our largest and gamest wild bird, but a native of America.

To be sure, young turkeys aren't so smart. They love to get their feet wet so they may die from it. In dry sections, young turkeys have been known to jump down an artesian well 90 feet deep in order to get their feet wet. But the adult turkey is wise and wily, a noble spectacle in the woods and popular in a cooked state, owing to his magnificent bust development and his capacity for holding stuffing or insertion, and his superiority when worked over into turkey hash.

But if we are going to make a change in emblems, why not choose the worm—the humble, dumb, unresisting worm—as typical of most of the present populace? It could be a one-sided worm, too, which would save costs in modeling, because so many of us are the kinds of worms that never turn.

### The Sucker Crop.

PARLIAMENT, next month, will pass statutes to curb stock market tricksters, fly-by-night brokers, and bucket shop operators who, it's estimated, are fleecing the British public to the tune of \$25,000,000 annually.

We've tried it and it doesn't work. As Barnum stated, a sucker is born every minute—and sometimes twins. But the crooks who prey on the sucker crop, like the Dionne quintuplets, come along in batches. That breed spawn close to shore and the young all survive.

Thus is the rule of supply and demand balanced. In good times, there are just enough suckers to go around. In hard times, the suckers grow scarce, but, when one comes along, the crooks raffle him off and the winner takes all.

Anyhow, legislation won't save a sucker from himself—at least not in this country. He'll break through the law in order to prove he's a sucker in good standing in the suckers' lodge.

By the way, brother-member, how many degrees have you taken?

### Restrained Statements.

A WAYFARER in Oklahoma, who claimed to have starved himself for forty-one days, on being asked how he felt, replied that he felt sort of hungry. Investigation showed the stranger had been cheating now and then to the extent of a clandestine beef stew or a surreptitious stack of wheat, but wasn't it a magnificently restrained statement?

For underemphatic, I can think of but a single instance to match it. In my youth, we had a policeman in our town with a nervous mannerism of killing folks.

One night, I was passing Uncle Tom Emery's saloon and snack-stand for colored only. A group of subdued-looking customers fetched out the limp remains of a dark person who had been bored thrice through the heart.

"Uncle Tom," I inquired of the proprietor, "isn't that Monkey John?"

"Sho' is, suh."

"How did it happen?" I asked.

"Well, suh," said Uncle Tom, "it seem like he musta antagonized Mr. Buck Evitts."

### Smoked Glasses for Snakes.

ON THE way here, I attended this year's snake dance. The snake dance has become indeed a strange sight—for the snakes. If the tourists don't modify their wardrobes by next year, I expect to see the snakes wearing smoked glasses. Veteran snakes that have taken part during past seasons are showing signs of the strain. The bull snakes still hiss—as who could blame them?—but the rattlers no longer rattle freely, evidently fearing it might be mistaken for applause.

The commissioner of Indian affairs wants the Navajos to grow fewer goats. The Navajos are balking. Goat hair is a profitable crop; goat meat makes good eating—for an aborigine stomach, anyhow—and goat smell is agreeable for Navajo noses. It seems to neutralize some of the other perfumes noticed during shopping hour in a reservation trading post.

IRVIN S. COBB.

© WNU Service.

## The Happiness Trio



PRIDE goeth with Fall and glamor, too, Milady, when you wear distinguished fashions by Sew-Your-Own! Today's trio gives youth a chance to express itself in an individual manner; gives the adult figure an opportunity to display a new high in chic, and last—but we wouldn't say least—a utility model that's as right for daughter as for mother, as attractive on cousin Emma as it is on Aunt Grace.

Swank 'n' Sweet.

Young and inspired is the little two piece that just stepped into the picture at the left. The topper is one that will set a vogue in this woman's town and make you the swankiest of the whole lot of Lafa-Lots. If you're asked to picnic in the colorful Autumn woods, wear this number in henna-colored wool for real satisfaction and that perfect harmony that makes picnicking a picnic.

For Kitchen Capers.

And before you go, there'll be sandwiches to make, potatoes to peel, and lemons to squeeze—that's where and when the gingham gown in the center comes in. Of course, its novel yoke-and-leeve-in-one construction makes it a most attractive model to sew as well as to wear. The skirt has flare enough for cutting those kitchen capers one has to when minutes are few and work plentiful. Make this simple five-piece

frock in two versions and be sure of everyday chic at minimum cost.

### Style Success.

While we go picnicking and places, don't think Mommy isn't going to swing out in style, too. She's certain of success when she goes to her Club; she's sure of well-groomed elegance for Sunday best in the slenderizing frock at the right. It does wonders for the figure that needs it, and it is equally becoming to sizes 18 and 20. So, Mommy, no matter what your size or the color of your hair, you'll be young enough and slim enough in this frock to feel like the very essence of fashion.

### The Patterns.

Pattern 1336 is designed for sizes 12 to 20 (30 to 38 bust). Size 14 requires 5 1/2 yards of 35 inch material plus 4 1/4 yards of 1 1/4 inch bias strip for fold for trimming.

Pattern 1381 is designed for sizes 14 to 44. Size 16 requires 3 1/4 yards of 39 inch material.

Pattern 1286 is designed for sizes 36 to 48. Size 38 requires 4 1/2 yards of 39 inch material.

Send your order to The Sewing Circle Pattern Dept., Room 1020, 211 W. Wacker Dr., Chicago, Ill. Price of patterns, 15 cents (in coins) each.

© Bell Syndicate.—WNU Service.

Uncle Phil Says:

Yes, Somebody Else

When a speaker abuses mankind in general, his hearers approve because they know somebody else "who is just like that."

Airplanes "drone" and "zoom," but no word seems to be perfect in its application to an airplane's noise.

You don't have to fool all of the people all of the time. A majority of one is enough.

The girl who tries to keep several men on the string may find presently that she has a knotty problem to solve.

To every young maiden marriage is a solemn thing; and not to be married still a more solemn thing.

CLIP THIS AD!  
Worth \$7.50

Take it to any radio dealer! See the new 1938 farm radios. Choose the radio you like best, and ask your dealer how you can save \$7.50 on the purchase of a new battery radio equipped with a genuine Wincharger.

Wincharger turns FREE WIND POWER into electricity, brings "big-city" reception to farm homes. Eliminates "B" batteries. Ends expensive recharging. Provides plenty of free electricity to run your radio as much as you want for less than 50¢ a year power operating cost.

See Any Radio Dealer!

WINCHARGER CORPORATION  
Sioux City, Iowa

CHEW LONG BILL NAVY TOBACCO 5¢ PLUG

LIFE'S LIKE THAT By Fred Neher



"Paw's practicing . . . he's gonna hitch-hike to Florida this winter."