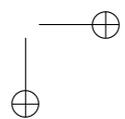
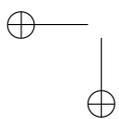
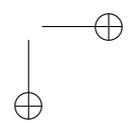
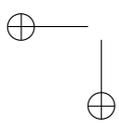
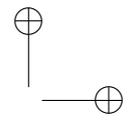
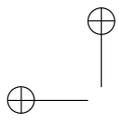
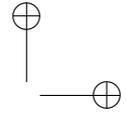
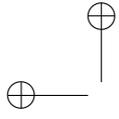


Journal of Forgotten Days



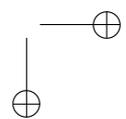
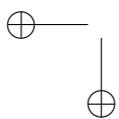


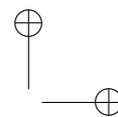
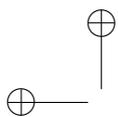


Journal of Forgotten Days

Albert Jay Nock

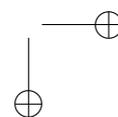
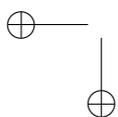
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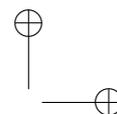
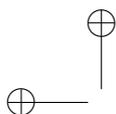




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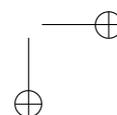
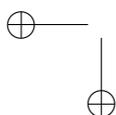
Preface

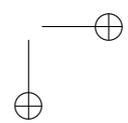
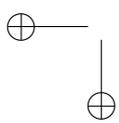
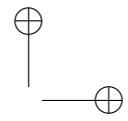
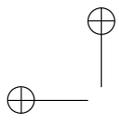
Before he died three years ago, Albert Jay Nock carefully destroyed all notes and manuscripts he had written except a batch of letters and a continuation of his *Journal of These Days* (published in 1934). Apparently he considered these writings, and these alone, suitable for publication after his death, which he knew to be imminent.

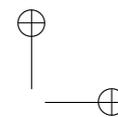
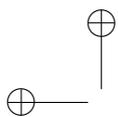
Some of the people and events he commented on in the continuation of the *Journal* are forgotten; some are trivia of history; some are merely oddities. Nevertheless, the comments that they inspired are not necessarily out of date or negligible. In the belief that the opinions of Albert Jay Nock still make good reading, we are happy to see the publication of this volume.

S. A. N.

F. J. N.

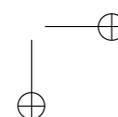
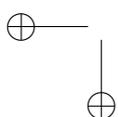


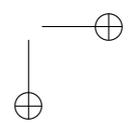
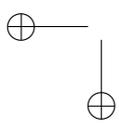
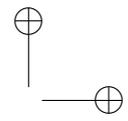
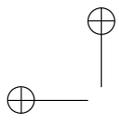


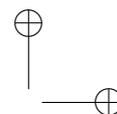
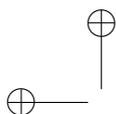


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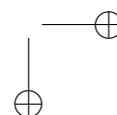
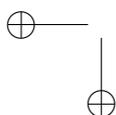


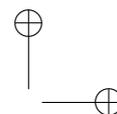
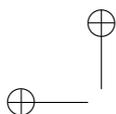


1934 May

5 May – Off for Florida by steamer to Jacksonville, with a sense of having been dragooned into going, though very agreeably. I can see no reason in the nature of things why one should go to Florida, and I have no idle curiosity about what may be there. From a traveller's point of view, no country is interesting unless it has a peasantry, i.e., a population extensively and permanently rooted in the soil. With our enormous natural advantages, America might have become a land of well-to-do, contented and progressive people, with all the self-respecting independence of spirit that economic security breeds – a land, in short, worth visiting. That is what Mr. Jefferson seems to have hoped for and looked for, though one does not see how he could have expected anything of the kind, when he saw the course that things were actually taking.

6 May – One can sometimes guess a person's religious persuasion by his general appearance, though not so often now as formerly. When I was a little boy, I remember, my father used to pick them out pretty well, and got a lot of amusement out of it. I would bet high that most



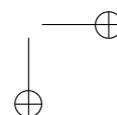
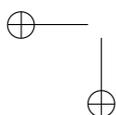


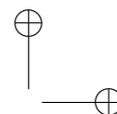
of the people on board this steamer are Methodists and Baptists, though I do not know why Methodists and Baptists should favour Florida particularly, nor have I ever heard that they do. A couple of artificial blonde young women spice the general tone of the passenger-list; also a young married pair who are Ebrew Jews, the lady very handsome, and both seeming to be extremely agreeable and pleasant. One likes that term of Shakespeare's; it seems to imply a kind of differentiation, though this is of course wholly imaginary.

The ship is good. This is my second venture on an American ship, the first one being on a ship of the Export Line last year, from Marseilles to Gibraltar, and both make me think that we have first-class naval architects in this country. One can not escape the infernal radio, however, except in one's cabin; the noise of it is all over the ship. It is now playing some of William H. Woodin's compositions; he has just died, or is being buried today, or something of the kind, I don't know just what. They are creditable and interesting. One likes to think that we have had a Secretary of the Treasury capable of employing his leisure in that way.

7 May – There is a . . . settlement at the mouth of the St. John's River, called Mayville, I think. We are just now passing it. . . . I have often wondered, if Spain had kept the Floridas, Mexico its original territory, France Louisiana, and if New England had seceded in 1814, whether we would now show a higher type of civilization. I doubt it.

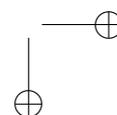
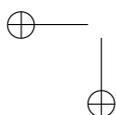
The river is covered with water hyacinths which make a beautiful display and give the illusion that the boat

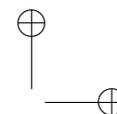




is walking over dry land. After last night's parboiling humidity, I expected to find the air here intolerable, but on the contrary it is delightfully clear and fresh. This seems anomalous, but I hear that the praise of Florida's climate is not greatly exaggerated. The sun today is very hot, but that is as it should be, and if the air is dry, one does not mind it. Probably the protracted heat is enervating, however – it must be. People on the wharves are curiously immobile; they could pass for statues. I fancy there are few deaths from heart failure in this region. On the other hand, the aquatic birds are very lively. They exist here in great number and variety, but I do not recognize many kinds – ducks, loons, cranes, gulls. I would like to see a flamingo, but I am told they are scarce.

8 May – I did not stop in Jacksonville, but went directly to Orlando by motorbus – four hours. Passed through uninteresting country; the towns and villages are few, scattered, and of a broken-down appearance. There is improvement visible at De Land and then onward to Winter Park and Orlando. Also some activity; up to De Land, things look very stagnant. The soil gives rise to pitch pine; one sees fruit trees at De Land. I doubt that much of the soil above De Land is arable. Orlando makes a good impression; there are pleasant lakes about, and the town is well wooded. People build houses Northern-style, which is odd – the place looks precisely like a New Jersey suburb, so much so that one instinctively expects to see a procession of commuters move out on the warpath each morning. I have seen one or two specimens of real-estate-Spanish architecture, but nothing good.



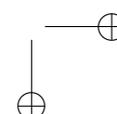
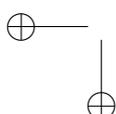


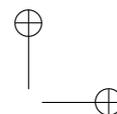
These Northern-style frame houses seem ill-adapted to the climate, and I am told they are; a most unintelligent construction, one would say.

9 May – I find that Methodist and Baptists predominate heavily hereabouts, and also that most of the tourists who come here from the North are of these persuasions. I was interested in this, remembering my fellow-passengers on the steamer. My notion is that this accounts for a good many of the odd impressions one gets from one's surroundings here.

10 May – A drive over to Palm Springs, where there is a large swimming pool fed by a vast flow of sulphur water. A pleasant place, the vegetation reminding me vaguely of one or two spots in Portugal. I doubt that many of the trees are indigenous, but they do well. There is no settlement at Palm Springs; the bathing establishment is out in the woods, and that is all there is to it. The assortment of lakes and springs in this vicinity is very charming.

11 May – Today I looked over Rollins College, at Winter Park, out of curiosity, for I had seen it advertised a great deal in newspaper articles and other forms of press agent's stuff. I expected to find it an utter humbug, but I do not think it is. I think that it is doing the best it can with what it has in the way of student-material, no doubt better than many other schools. Its best is of course poor, for its material is wretchedly poor; yet no worse than elsewhere. I met some members of the faculty; they made a very good impression on me. The

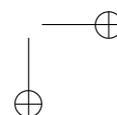
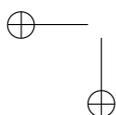


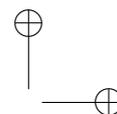


situation of the college is excellent. One good feature of the place is a broad walk lined with stones, each stone being from the birthplace of some distinguished man; his name and date are cut in the stone. This seems an ingenious way to remind young people that they have a spiritual heritage, and probably it is as effective as any.

12 May – Odd, that Florida should have been the first corner of the country to be discovered, and the last to be developed. It is a frontier state at present, blighted by the speculator, and staggering under a prodigious weight of over-government. The ratio of jobholders and professional politicians to the balance of the population makes one think of Artemus Ward’s militia company composed exclusively of major generals. I suppose there must be fifty or sixty counties in this state, each one with its nest of parasites, and precious few of them with a producing population large enough to pay the bills and have anything left over. I am told that Jacksonville and Tampa are the only “producer cities”; all the others are of the consumer type.

Probably not many realize how the rapid centralization of government in America has fostered a kind of organized pauperism. The big industrial states contribute most of the Federal revenue, and the bureaucracy distributes it in the pauper states wherever it will do the most good in a political way. The same thing takes place within the states themselves. In fostering pauperism it also by necessary consequence fosters corruption; obviously it is impossible to have any but a corrupt government under these conditions, either in state or nation. All this is due to the iniquitous theory of taxation with which

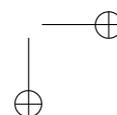
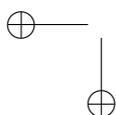


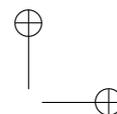


this country has been so thoroughly indoctrinated – that a man should be taxed according to his ability to pay, instead of according to the value of the privileges he obtains from the government.

14 May – Driving down to see the Bok tower, a curiously appropriate monument to the man who conceived the notion of building it. That is really all one can say. I once visited a mid-Western college whose tradition is all in the most straitest sect of Congregationalism. It is located on the flat sand of the Lake Region, in the Lake Region’s dull gray atmosphere. With all that, they had just put up a fine new batch of Italian Renaissance buildings, and were immensely proud of them. Again, there was little to say – what, really, could one say? The thing was all the more monstrous because they had directly under their eyes a superb specimen of their own true architecture; it is a red brick New England Congregationalist meeting-house, noble in its proportions and details, a perfect type. If they had built up to that model, they would have got something really to be proud of.

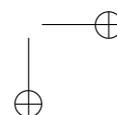
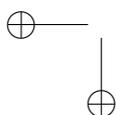
15 May – Tampa. I have done so much motoring these last few days that if I thought it would do any good I would pray to be delivered from the sight of another automobile as long as I live. The signposts make me suspect that road mileage in Florida must have been measured by the method of King Pharamond, which Panurge expounds in answer to Pantagruel’s question why the leagues around Paris are so short. I have kept my eye on the speedometer, and it backs my impression that the mileage around the towns here is much shorter

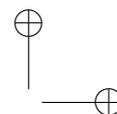
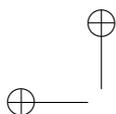




than the outlying mileage. We reach Tampa at last, and get an excellent supper in a Spanish restaurant. What impresses me most all over the region I have covered is the astonishing cheapness of living. Meats are relatively high, but most fish is cheap and very good, while excellent vegetables go for almost nothing, and one feels very affluent in the matter of citrus fruits. Tampa has merits, no doubt, but I shall not be here long enough to find out what they are.

16 May – A delightful few minutes with my good friend Francis Wilson at Clearwater yesterday. He has a pleasant property on the shore there, where he spends his winters with his books and over the game that the French call *jeu de quilles* which seems to have come into vogue here. It is the old original type of bowling; I think the English call it skittles, though I am not sure. I am very fond of Francis Wilson, and it did me good to have a word with him. His family were away up North, and he was keeping bachelor's hall under the guardianship of an old-time negro factotum who looks after him with a purely proprietary air that is most delightful. This country will never know the luck it has in the fact that by nature the negro is so undemanding, sweet-natured, and above all, so lacking in vindictiveness. But for this the "negro problem" would be a bad one. We have done, I think, pretty much everything that could be done to destroy this disposition, but fortunately with little success so far. Still, it can be done, and if we persevere we may yet succeed.

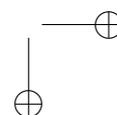
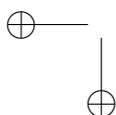


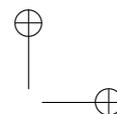


17 May – A pleasant conversation about the lyric poets of the Restoration, They always interested me by the quality of their verse, and some of them by its apparent anomaly. If the Earl of Rochester and Sir Charles Sedley were as hard citizens as history makes them out, how did they manage to write such exquisite simple lyrics; and above all, how did they manage to give them an accent of unimpeachable sincerity and tenderness? If the tone of high seriousness does not pervade Rochester's lines to his mistress, then I simply do not know it when I hear it. Probably history judges these erring brothers by the worst they did instead of by the best they could do, or even by a fair conjectural average. When a man speaks himself out in verse as unmistakably as they did, I should call it evidence that at least he has his moments, and that they are rather great moments.

18 May – Out of Florida, by the afternoon boat from Jacksonville, having motored up through Daytona and St. Augustine, the latter being the most agreeable place I have seen here. Lunch at Daytona. I picked up a religious publication that was lying around, and found it an extraordinary curiosity, representing what Henry Mencken calls the hogwallow type of evangelism, which I think must prevail here pretty largely. What interested me was that the leading editorial, after a properly pious prelude, resolved itself into a strong boost for local real-estate operations, thus attesting the well-known truth that America's one true god is Good Business.

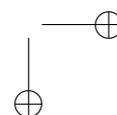
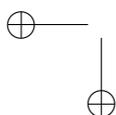
I have been charmingly entertained here by aliens like myself, whom circumstances brought here. I can not say too much for their kindness; yet I am not grieved

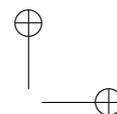
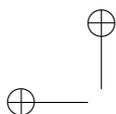




by the thought that I shall never see Florida again, and shall probably never see anything in America west of Jersey City Heights. A country that has no peasantry is essentially weak as well as uninteresting. Hygiene and athletics do not produce a characterful people, and any pretense that they do or can is mere fraud. The healthy college-bred half-wit, male and female, makes the best kind of serf-minded adult. We have turned them out in shoals for thirty-five years, and their spirit rules the country. Why, then, should one travel among them?

19 May – The boat stopped for an hour or two at Charleston, which still gives evidence of being an agreeable city, or rather perhaps of having been one not too long ago. The tradition of kindness and good manners appears to linger fitfully. I saw the grave of John C. Calhoun; it reminded me that, next to John Adams, Calhoun was the most profound student of government that we ever produced, though I think he seldom gets credit for it. It seems strange that men like Adams and Calhoun could have come so close to a sound doctrine of the State without being able to recognize it. I suppose the co-operation of the *Zeitgeist* is necessary, and they did not have it. Yet the odd thing is that one can piece together a sound doctrine out of their own writings, though they were apparently unable to formulate one. They make it perfectly clear that the State is an institution forced by a victorious group upon a defeated group, and having for its object the economic exploitation of one class by another. One wonders what the attitude of Adams and Calhoun would have been if they had realized

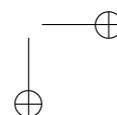
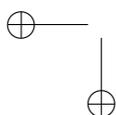


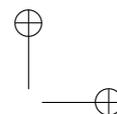


that no State known to history originated in any other manner or for any other purpose.

21 May – In lower New York, around the financial district, one sometimes notices people smoking and chewing gum at the same time. I never saw this elsewhere, nor did I ever see so many men chewing gum in the course of the day's work. I notice too that down here, if a woman goes up to a newsstand to buy a paper, the dealer always gets ready to hand her out a tabloid; he takes for granted that she wants one, unless she declares for the other kind. This interests me; I wonder whether the percentage of women is generally higher among tabloid-buyers, or whether it is higher in this district only. I have often wondered whether the appetite for second-hand smut and crime is not really keener among women at present than among men. Certainly the condition of the stage and the cinema would make one think so, for they are supported by women and must reflect their taste.

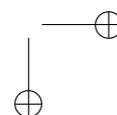
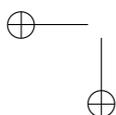
22 May – The terrorism that the government is exercising over men in business is appalling to me. I have just come from dinner with a man who has large interests which as far as I know are quite legitimate, and he quite unbo-somed himself. Apparently men who have nothing worse against them than honesty, decency, industry and ability have to put up with every petty and crotchety exaction of our meddling bureaucracy, or they are immediately subjected to vindictive annoyances of the most exasperating kind. There is nothing like this to breed serf-mindedness, and nothing like serf-mindedness to destroy character. I thoroughly believe that no people in the Middle Ages

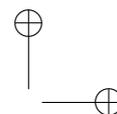
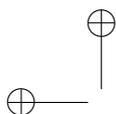




ever showed such general and inveterate serf-mindedness as the American people has showed for twenty years, and with so little excuse or reason. Moreover, I believe that this people is so far gone in serf-mindedness that it will never recover. When one thinks of the innumerable tyrannies that have combined to build up this spirit, one sees precious little chance of its being changed. The tyranny of employers, labour-leaders, advertisers, bureaucrats, newspapers, bankers, lawmongers, gangsters, religious fanatics, police, political bosses – Americans have accepted this tyranny so tamely and so long that I believe they are not only forever incapable of anything better than serf-mindedness, but incapable of realizing that any other state of mind is either possible or desirable. Hence I think they deserve just about what they are getting and in all probability what they will soon get; nor do I see why any one should try to avert the consequences of their choice, since they accepted it freely.

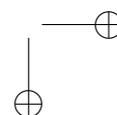
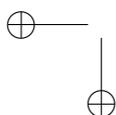
23 May – My old acquaintance Bertrand Russell is a mathematician of the first order, but when he undertakes to write about social and economic matters I can not always follow him implicitly, though he says many superb things. The other day I came across his saying that “advertising is a device for making fools believe nonsense.” Nothing could be better; that is precisely what it is, and all it is. I am reminded of this by hearing that our navy is coming here to anchor in the Hudson River and show itself off to the populace as a prestige-maker for our country’s greatness. Perhaps it is already here, but not having seen a newspaper in some time, I do not know.

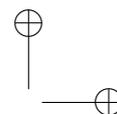




24 May – I am sad beyond expression at hearing of Brand Whitlock's sudden death at Cannes. Some one told me he had died, and I bought a newspaper only to find, in spite of all my hopes, that it was so. His death affects me as profoundly as the death of Maurice Francis Egan did, some years ago. They were both of a type whose disappearance makes the world seem never quite the same again. Whitlock's connexion with politics was bad for him, and not nearly enough good came of it to justify the sacrifice; he was essentially a philosopher and by habit a man of letters, to whom public life was utterly unsuited. He might have risen to great eminence as an essayist, critic and historian – he was historically minded and had a superb sense of history – but he did not discover his proper place in the world of letters until too late to take it, for he thought of himself as a writer of fiction until a very few years ago, when he set about his biography of Lafayette. Postwar America had no attractions for him, and he lived at Cannes for the last twenty years of his life. It was the best he could do, for his country could put him to no use but a futile and degrading one, and it had no understanding of the things he loved, and no respect for them.

25 May – On my way to the South County. A red-haired boy sitting by me on the train, reading Tourgueniev's *Fathers and Children* – most extraordinary! I thought he might be doing it as a college exercise, but he did not have quite the right attitude for that; he seemed to be reading it out of sheer interest. I thought of striking up a conversation and finding out about this, but did not do so; after all, I could not quite justify my curiosity, for it

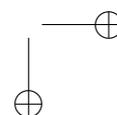
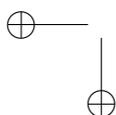


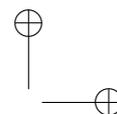
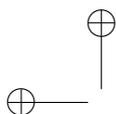


would have been quite competent for him to say he was a civilized person, reading a civilized person's literature – why raise any questions about that? Whatever his motives were, I was pleased to see him engaged in that occupation, and all the more because the sight was such an unusual one.

26 May – All the hedges here in Narragansett are winter-killed, and I hear that the fine box hedges over in New York State have gone the same way. Stone walls are more in character here than hedges, and it would improve the appearance of things if the hedges were done away with and walls put up in their place. It is no trouble to train hardy growth over the walls, and the effect of this is good. Some of the walls here are covered with euonymus, which has stood the winter perfectly, and these walls seem to me much more sightly than hedges. I notice, however, that insects and vermin are more abundant than usual, in spite of the hard winter, and so are the birds. While I was reading on a screened porch this afternoon, a quail whistled behind me, only five or six feet away. It startled the wits out of me. How do such small creatures produce a volume of sound so disproportionate to their size? I have often wondered at this when I have heard cats fighting, babies screaming, whippoorwills, and the like.

27 May – I heard a capital story today of a humorous Russian who somehow got to this country as a postwar refugee, and who has since been living by one means or another, as best he might. Latterly he got in on the dole, but he had no illusions about it, seeing its electioneering character as clearly as any of us. “Yes,” he said, “five

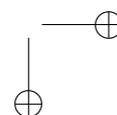
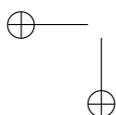


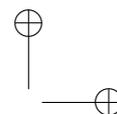


years ago I was a poor louse; today I am a great national problem.”

28 May – The worst of this ever growing cancer of Statism is its moral effect. The country is rich enough to stand its frightful economic wastage for a long time yet, and still prosper, but it is already so poverty-stricken in its moral resources that the present drain will quickly run them out. I was talking tonight with an old acquaintance in the textile business who said his business had been in the red for eight years, but he had kept it going because he felt responsible for his people and did not like to turn them adrift. “I don’t feel that way now,” he said. “If the government proposes to tell me how I shall run my business, it can jolly well take the responsibility.” That is the frame of mind that Statism inevitably breeds, and a nation that is in that frame of mind is simply no nation at all, as the experience of Rome in the second century shows.

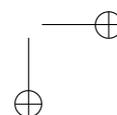
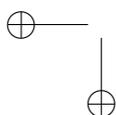
29 May – It gives one a strange sensation to get a letter from a man already dead. Yesterday, four days after Brand Whitlock’s death was reported here, I got a long letter from him. He wrote very cheerfully, mentioning his illness and a forthcoming operation, but apparently unaware. His letter ran chiefly to books, and he complained humorously of the incredible degradation that the English language has undergone in America. “The headline writers, correspondents who write telegraphese, bright reporters, advertising experts and immigrant geniuses have done too good a job. They have laid the ax to the root of the tree, and extirpated the very idiom of the

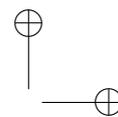
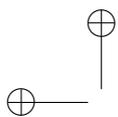




language.” So indeed they have; and he might well have counted in the fictioneers who celebrate the life on Iowan farms and the horrors of Crackerdom. Whitlock says, “Actually, I can’t understand half of what the popular publications are trying to say”; nor yet can I. A letter from Newton Baker says of Whitlock’s own reverent and careful writing, “It is the work of a jeweller.”

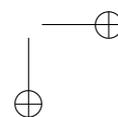
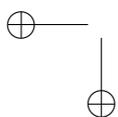
30 May – I have read Henry Mencken’s latest book, his treatise on morals, for the third time and with increasing respect. It has some kind of footing in the best-seller class for the moment, I believe, but I am afraid it will not be as widely read as it should be. I am not disparaging Alfred Knopf when I say the book would do better with another publisher; I mean only that no publishing house can do well by any and every kind of book. Probably Scribner’s come nearer to it than any other house in the country. One thing that makes Alfred Harcourt a great publisher is that he always knows what kind of book he can not sell, and is always ready to say that a book should go elsewhere, no matter how good it may be. I think it is bad publishing policy to tie an author up to one house if he is a grade above the mass-production order, or a sensationalist; in those cases, I suppose, it is just as well. If I had a really good novel to dispose of, I would rather give it to Harper’s than any one, even Scribner’s; on the other hand, a first-class literary travel book that Houghton Mifflin and Company could sell by the cartload would die on Harper’s press. As publishing goes nowadays, and is likely to go for sometime, I think that a small house that really knows its product and is willing to remain a small house, has a

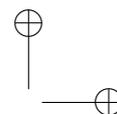




considerable advantage both with authors and with the trade – of course, provided it knows how to consolidate its advantage.

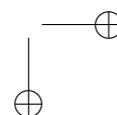
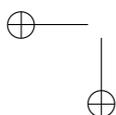
Mencken's book was most incompetently reviewed, as far as I saw, but that was probably to be expected, for the people who turn out the daily grist of book notices are particularly weak on erudition and on style. The "immigrant geniuses" among them resent both, and the rest pass them over; so since the book is erudite and well written, it got unworthy treatment.

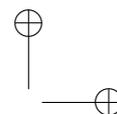




1934 June

1 June – On my way down from the South County, a man on the train told me that this is a great country and that he had every confidence in its future; the point being that he had just turned over some stock in a motorcar concern for enough “velvet” to pay a year’s schooling for his son. He seemed to be a very decent, rather well-spoken person, and put out this naive view with a curious sort of innocence, such as one remarks pretty regularly in the better type of American when he talks about public affairs. I agreed with him that this is still the land of opportunity as far as money and comfort go, and asked him if he knew of anything else it had to offer that is worth having, and whether, all things considered, the money and comfort do not come pretty high. This seemed to be a brand-new idea to him, so I left him to mull it over. I told him if he thought of anything before the train reached New York, I would be glad to hear about it; but I did not see him again.

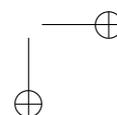
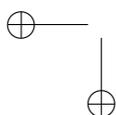


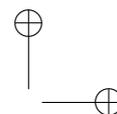


2 June – One wonders how far female schoolteachers are responsible for the moral enervation that appears unable to make any practical distinction between expediency and right. Amiel says somewhere that “women are mostly chaste, but they have no morals”; and no doubt circumstances have made them largely creatures of expediency, which I suppose is what Amiel had in mind. Hence, probably it would be natural for them to inculcate an undue respect for expediency. The coincidence may not amount to much, but it is worth notice that the least characterful peoples are those whose children are taught by women.

3 June – I have been interested in the troubles of Andorra. That little republic on the Franco-Spanish border has run on peacefully and prosperously for generations, with no disturbance of any kind, and now we suddenly begin to hear about “intervention.” What we do not hear is that a French company has lately got a power concession there; but so it is, and there you have the old story again in the same old terms.

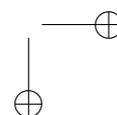
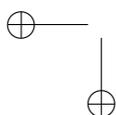
4 June – What distresses one about these depressions is the degradation they bring upon human character; to look at one and another of those one knows, and wonder how long his self-respect can hold up against the strain of poverty and anxiety. It is a dreadful thing to see some one throwing overboard piece by piece all the pitiful little deckload of decencies, integrities and honest humble hopes, merely for the sake of keeping the physical hulk afloat.

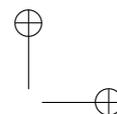




5 June – I see that the abuses of the franking privilege by Congressmen are being aired today. It appears that Congressmen send telegrams at public expense to their henchmen at home, such as, “Invited to dinner at the White House tomorrow night. Spread this over all the papers in the district.” This reminds me once more that Americans are soaked in the strangest kind of mysticism. They believe in “leadership”; in the Republican party; in this or that stripe of evangelism; in newspapers; in “prosperity”; and so on through innumerable things in which they can not give even the semblance of a reason for believing – indeed, what they actually believe in is a pure creation of their own fancy, and has nothing whatever to do with the thing they think they believe in. It seems also that they believe in Congress, or that they think they do, which is quite enough for a Congressman’s purposes.

6 June – It has often seemed to me that the cultivated Jew in New York must get somewhat the view of his coreligionists that a cultivated Englishman or American, living abroad, gets of the travelling masses of his countrymen; he must regard them as an alien and obnoxious people. Belgians have told me that they could not believe that the refugees they saw in England and Holland during the war were really Belgians, for they had never seen anything like them at home; and I imagine Englishmen would say something like that about the crowds that cross the Channel on a Bank holiday. There have been other persecuted peoples and sects in the world – the Dutch, the Belgians, the Quakers – and they all seem to have got some sort of valuable discipline out of

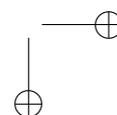
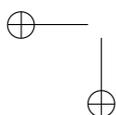


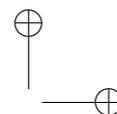


persecution, while apparently all that the Jew has got out of it is his vast aptitude for persistence. Another curious differentiation is that in his own mind he has erected the plea of persecution into a kind of charter. If he is reprehended for some breach of conduct, he takes it as coming to him, not because he is *ad hoc* objectionable, but because he is a Jew, and he accordingly enters the plea of persecution. Obviously this amounts to a claim of exemption that is most exorbitant and improper, and therefore provocative.

7 June – Some one gave a very good account of Mrs. Roosevelt's popularity today by saying that she is a living example of what half a million or more clubwomen in the United States would give all their old boots and shoes to be – footloose, energetic, gregarious, putting a finger in every pie, giving out an opinion about anything and everything, and rollicking in unlimited publicity. I think this is so, and that she will therefore be a magnificent vote-getter. A woman who knows her pretty well described her to me some time ago in similar terms, as a half-baked-woman's woman, very sentimental and a good bit of a fool, but so completely well-intentioned and rather lovable that sensible women were disposed to put up with a good deal of her flubdubbery on that account. One sure thing is that she is an inexhaustible gold mine for American journalism; one sometimes wonders what it would do without her.

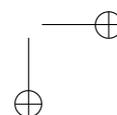
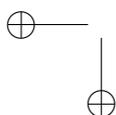
9 June – Puritanism is always being blamed for the wrong thing. Its various taboos never did half as much real harm to the spirit of mankind as its doctrine of a

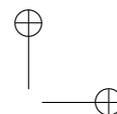




divine sanction for work. This doctrine is supposed to have Genesis on its side, but Genesis represents work as a curse, a punishment, not a virtue or a discipline, and I don't see how anything much in the way of a doctrine can be got out of that. I can not find any trace of this doctrine in England before the rise of a politically dominant industrial middle class; another example of the way that ecclesiastical codes have of following the current economic system. The American immigrants brought this doctrine over with them and fastened it on the country so successfully that it has gone unquestioned ever since. We get it in Longfellow's "Psalm of Life," and in the like doggerel of Protestant hymns – "Work, for the night is coming," etc. The most sensible thing I have heard lately was from two or three youngsters who wondered why anybody should work, things being as they are. With such an enormous slice of the national income devoted to vote-buying and machine-building, why should anybody work?

10 June – La Guardia is doing a good job as mayor of New York, and doing it extremely well. This interests me because the situation is one that occurs sometimes in municipal politics, though very infrequently, where the public interest coincides almost completely with the jobholder's interest. I would not trust La Guardia, on the strength of his record, as far as I could throw a bull by the tail; yet New York will get a great deal of good out of his term, perhaps enough to re-elect him, which I rather hope will happen, just as on other grounds I hope Roosevelt will be re-elected. If I live long enough, I shall enjoy seeing Roosevelt confronted with the consequences

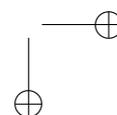
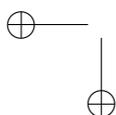


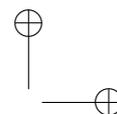


of the mess he has made, and having his nose rubbed in it.

11 June – I have been reading again the best piece of character-drawing that I have seen in ten years, *Father Malachy's Miracle*. Marjorie put me under everlasting obligations by sending me the English edition when it first came out; I would almost certainly have missed it otherwise. What a superb thing it is! – every character distinct, sharp, individual, beautifully drawn, and interesting; not one among them but that is interesting, fascinating, every minute of the time. I hear it did not do very well here. Grenville Vernon tells me that it went against the grain of a good many Roman Catholics. How they could find it objectionable is beyond me, but apparently they did, and *non est disputandum*. One can say only that their zeal for the faith seems much more ardent than intelligent, and that unintelligent zeal is a pretty poor asset for any faith, in the long run.

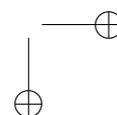
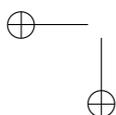
12 June – I never pick up a bottle of Harvey's Sauce without a sense of exhilaration. The label bears the proprietor's address, E. Lazenby and Son, 2 Edwards Street, Portman Square, London. It seems that at some time in the past, the London Board of Public Works changed the name of Edwards Street to Wigmore Street; but did E. Lazenby and Son tamely change their label to correspond? They did not. They put another label on the back of the bottle, which reads that notwithstanding the change of name of Edwards Street ordered by the Board of Public Works, every bottle of Harvey's Sauce would still bear the label used so many years. There is

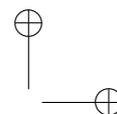




the good old spirit for you! In other words, any meddling crew of ignorant jobholders that expects E. Lazenby and Son to follow their whims has another guess coming, and the Board of Works may go to a warmer clime, and stay there.

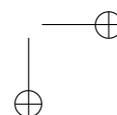
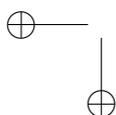
14 June – Serious drought is said to be setting in throughout the agricultural states. It would be interesting if we had a summer of it, such as we can have, on occasion. Secretary Wallace's schemes for reducing production would look pretty thin if the Lord should take the humorous notion to show him what could be done in that line by somebody who really knows how. Still, it would enable Mr. Roosevelt to extend his machine-building and vote-hiring operations considerably, under the poor old threadbare "general welfare" clause, so I suppose Mr. Wallace would not be too unhappy. I hear Mr. Roosevelt thinks of putting in something over half a billion dollars on the relief of families in a stricken area of North Dakota; it comes to something over four thousand dollars a family, according to my informant's figure. Apparently it costs a whole devil of a lot of money to keep a family in North Dakota, or else the jobholders out there are uncommonly high-priced. Well, one may see now the scale on which this Administration has undertaken, as Mr. Jefferson said, "to waste the labours of the people under the pretence of taking care of them," and how adept it is at what Mr. Madison called "the old trick of turning every contingency into a resource for accumulating force in the government."

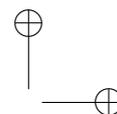




15 June – I remember hearing Cassandre say she wished that America would adopt simplified spelling outright, as a means of pushing the English language and the American jargon still farther apart. It might help; I think it would. Certainly some understanding should be arrived at whereby our language might be formally differentiated from English. Then the literary status of the writer of headlines or advertising copy, hill-billy fictioneers, “immigrant geniuses,” etc., would become clear, and that of writers who write English would likewise become clear. At present there is a most lamentable confusion apparent in this matter, especially among those who undertake to review books, and among those who attempt to deal with the two literatures in our institutions of learning.

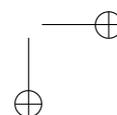
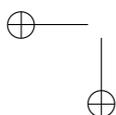
16 June – The hard times that have overtaken actors produce one good result, hardly very consoling to the actors, true, but good nevertheless. People in the outlying districts are seeing some pretty fair professional drama, which otherwise they would have little chance to see. Down Narragansett way, for instance, there are two summer theatres that will run five nights a week, with moderately good plays and talent, through July and August; and I hear that similar enterprises are going in other places. The movement for local drama, amateur and semi-professional, is extremely interesting, and taken by and large it can hardly help being very valuable. It would seem to be good for the actors too, as being the next thing to repertoire for making them carry a number of parts in quick succession. Lina Abarbanell told me that in her first season, I think it was in Poznań or Kraków, she played thirty parts – “Mlle. Nitouche”

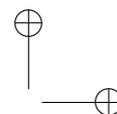




one night, next night a parlourmaid, next night “Eva,” and so on. Henry Dixey also told me he had been trained to do anything that was ever done on a stage, even to toe-dancing. There is no training like that and none that can take its place. When the Players Club revived Sheridan’s plays, some years ago, it was interesting to see the difference between those who had had this training and those who had not, especially the women. Some old-time artists disliked a long run. I remember old Schildkraut saying with disgust, “In this country you play every night the same part one week, two weeks, three weeks, and then supposing the play should make it *Gott soll hüten* a success, understand me, you would got to play it maybe a whole year yet.”

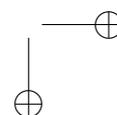
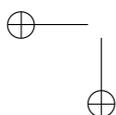
17 June – I have been trying to read the long-winded novel *Anthony Adverse*, which is having such an extraordinary run. I got through thirty pages, and then realized that my attention had gone woolgathering beyond recall, so I gave up. I often wonder what is the basis of the fantastic vogue that an indifferent book sometimes gets. When some one told Dumas that a history of Julius Caesar ought to make a sensation, he replied, “Mine has not made any. People read it, and that was all. It is the books one cannot read that make a sensation; they are like the dinners one can not digest. The dinners one digests are not so much as thought of next morning.” I think this may be fairly true. Nothing will sell a book like mouth-to-ear talk about it; indeed, I believe that is the only thing that will sell one, for reviews will not, nor will advertisements or printed encomiums. The sale of a book, however, at least in this country, is no guarantee of

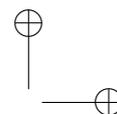




its good quality, but rather the opposite. At the moment I can recall only two or three books that had what one might call a sensational sale and were really much worth reading. I refer to books put out in my own lifetime, though before that even *Charlotte Temple* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, viewed without prejudice, are hardly what one would want to keep at one's elbow all one's days. The great exception to Dumas's rule, of course, is *The Education of Henry Adams*, and how that sensation came about, I believe God alone knows. A publisher told me once that, given the *Education's* prestige of a privately printed first edition of a hundred copies published by the Massachusetts Historical Society, he would guarantee to duplicate that sensation with any sort of halfway plausible book I cared to name. I do not believe a word of that, however – not a word.

18 June – Down Narragansett way I noticed that while the village girls are well fed and shapely enough, they have very plain faces. This may be due in part to their indifference towards helping their looks out with becoming dress, yet I think unless one counts Hollywood, we have no distinctive type. One occasionally sees a distinctive and attractive peasant type in the various foreign settlements here, but Americanization soon fades it out. One of the minor social assets furnished by a peasantry is the preservation of peasant types of beauty, and as I have seen them in several countries, they are hard to beat. Comparing them with the average run of high-life looks in the same countries, I wondered that morganatic marriages do not take place oftener than they do. The crown of England, for instance, would not interest me

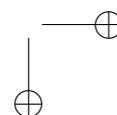
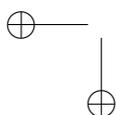




much under any circumstances, but if it were tied to any such wife as Ramsay MacDonald and John Simon would be likely to pick out for me, I would close out my hereditary rights at three cents on the dollar. I always thought Roumania acted shabbily about Carol's red-headed Jew from Jassy. If he could put up with her, which is more than I could do, she would be little enough consolation for any poor sinner who found himself landed in the sorry job he had, not only as king of Roumania, but also, I imagine, as the queen's husband, for a taste in female companionship is as notoriously individual as a taste in cigars. It may not be very fastidious, but it is one's own, as Touchstone sagely said.

19 June – I have read a newspaper now and then lately, or rather skimmed one, and have now given it up, probably for a long period, as it is probably as enervating a practice as one can follow. Its effect always puts me in mind of Erasmus's observation on certain writers, that *ex ilorum lectione surgo nescio quo modo frigidus affectus erga veram virtutem, sed irritator ad contentionem*; and it is hard enough work these days to keep out of that frame of mind, without deliberately cultivating it.

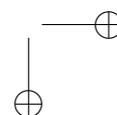
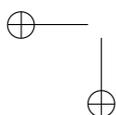
20 June – The Republicans are now picking up Roosevelt's doctrine that the Federal Government owes every citizen a living! This is simply a counter-bid for the vote of the enormous pressure group that Roosevelt has bought in. Rich as the English language is, one can not mould it to the full expression of one's contempt for the politician. Probably the nearest one can come to it is Kent's opinion of Oswald, in *King Lear*. If that play

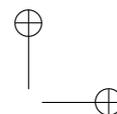




is ever revived, I would like to see Bill Parke take the part of Kent. I can hear Bill going through that terrific tirade with his voice running quieter and quieter, colder and colder, deadlier and deadlier, with each succeeding clause. Yet complete as the thing seems to be, it lets the politician off easily as compared with my inexpressible opinion of him.

23 June – Talk with a physician today about the economic effect of overweight. He said if a really effective campaign against overweight were made, the production of food and textiles would be enormously cut down, perhaps as much as by one-quarter. His basis of calculation is that one-third of the people in this country are overweight. This campaign would go a long way towards putting the physicians out of business too, he thought, since overweight tends to run one into arteriosclerosis, high blood pressure, Bright's disease, diabetes, heart disease, and the devil and all of other disorders whereon physicians thrive. I take all this with reservations, believing that there is a great deal of humbug about it, and that most people would do well to take their physique as the Lord made it, and stop fretting about it. In the club the other evening, when the subject of our women's craze for reducing came up, I said that if American women worried half as much about the state of their souls as they do about the shape of their behinds, we might hope to be a civilized people in time. A. M. said I was wrong, that the women knew their business, for if they so much as let on they had any souls, American men would have nothing to do with them; and this may be so – I had not thought of it. Some one told me two or three years ago

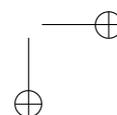
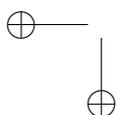


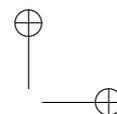
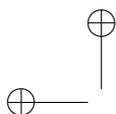


that the fashion of the “slender, boyish figure” for women was launched by designers who were pederasts. I could hardly believe that, nor can I now; one hates to think so meanly of one’s fellow-beings. Wherever the style came from, though, and however it got itself foisted on a whole generation of women, it was absurd to a degree.

24 June – I was reading Lowell’s verse today, about the stream of immigration into this country, and how America’s “free latchstring never was drawn in against the meanest child of Adam’s kin.” It put me in mind of Emma Lazarus’s sonnet that I think is graven on the Statue of Liberty, unless somebody lately has had the decency to scratch it off. What a world of balderdash was rampant in those days about our welcome to the “huddled masses” of Europe, “its homeless, tempest-tossed,” “the wretched refuse of its teeming shore”; and with the incurable mysticism of their kind, Americans actually believed that all that sort of neurasthenic slumgullion had some actual correspondence with fact. I know they did, for as a child I used to hear them say so, and even then I wondered where they got that notion. It is interesting now to look back on those days and see what poets, preachers, publicists and politicians could do when they spread themselves, by way of glorifying and sanctifying a demand for cheap, low-grade industrial labour.

25 June – I do not remember ever seeing higher tides and heavier surf at Narragansett than have set in this season, or more continuous. Usually, too, the south wind here brings on heavy sticky air, but this summer it has done the opposite. About all the light clear air we have

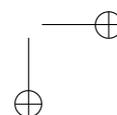
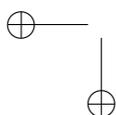


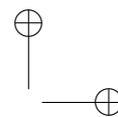
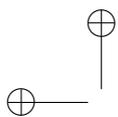


had so far has come in on a south wind, and the west wind, which usually brings it, has not done so. Things look to me at this stage as if we were in for a hot humid summer and a goodish bit of drought.

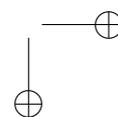
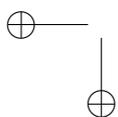
26 June – Why do the journalists who criticize the Administration unfavourably find it necessary to lead off their screeds by buttering up Roosevelt? They have worked this formula so regularly that it sounds to me like disgusting sycophancy, which I firmly believe it is. After all, we have never known Roosevelt in any capacity but that of a jobholder, and I can think of nothing in his public conduct and public character to differentiate him from any other jobholder, or to entitle him to exceptional favour; and certainly not his way of “being always at market,” as Mr. Jefferson said of Aaron Burr, whenever and wherever the chance of a good job was open. I have his record for fourteen years, and on the strength of it I would say that the correspondents and editorial writers who soft-soap him ought to be in better business. This is of a piece, however, with the general truth that as government consolidates and strengthens, the power of independent moral judgment in the citizenry weakens; and this is one of the most interesting phenomena of our time. One sees it in every country where Statism prevails – Italy, Germany, Russia, etc.

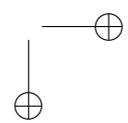
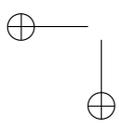
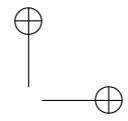
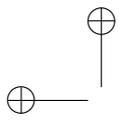
30 June – I have thought lately that strangers strike up a conversation in the streetcars oftener now than they used to, but it has probably just happened so when I have been around. Coming up on a Broadway car today, a rather pleasant middle-aged woman talked with me

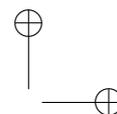




a few minutes; she was from the country, somewhere over in Jersey. I was struck by her saying that in the city God seemed always millions of miles away, and in the country He seemed close at hand. The idea is trite enough, but her way of phrasing it showed that it was original with her, and her manner showed that she was not speaking for effect. It was a pleasant thing to hear a stranger speak so, and it quite did me good.



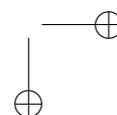
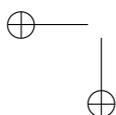


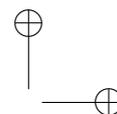
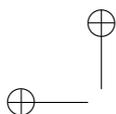


1934 July

1 July – The fierce heat is ruining things. Evidently we are in for a bad season, quite as I feared we might be. Reports from the West are bad, as though the Lord had got the notion to show the Department of Agriculture a trick or two about crop reduction. Well, it will give a good excuse for the Administration's great vote-buying campaign to go on. Roosevelt is the only monocrat I know of in modern times who bought his job, and Americans the only people tame enough to let a monocrat levy on them for the money to pay for it.

5 July – I do not remember a season opening earlier at the Pier. It began fully two weeks ago, and now the place is pretty well filled up with residents. As for transients, I never saw so many. There were more motorcars on the shore yesterday than there were two years ago at this time, and then, I remember, I thought there were as many as the space would hold. The shore from the Pier to Point Judith is lined with tourist camps and tent camps alive with people. One would think the whole

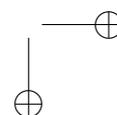
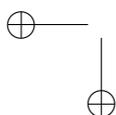


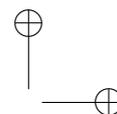


population of Pawtucket and Woonsocket had moved down here in a body.

6 July – Certainly the motor car and the radio are the most evil inventions of the age. They do some good, but nothing comparable with the harm they do. They simply illustrate the folly of letting invention and discovery run ahead of general intelligence. One of the most accurate indexes of general intelligence can be made by a candid examination of the uses to which the printing press, motorcar and radio are most commonly put.

8 July – I should think that New Englanders would soon begin to feel that *e pluribus unum* is an expensive luxury. New England and New York are paying most of the Federal tax bill for the whole country, and the Administration is distributing the proceeds where they will do the most good in a political way, among a lot of mendicant States in the West and South. It is all very well to do the right thing by one's poor relations, but supporting them in the style to which they are accustomed is another matter. All these States have expensive political organizations to keep up – that is to say, they are infested by hordes of voracious jobholders who have to be held in line – and they are kept up chiefly by levies on New England and New York. I have often thought it would be interesting if New England should call another convention at Hartford, as in 1812, and discuss secession; it would raise yells of anguish from every sturdy panhandler west of the Hudson and south of the Delaware. In a casual way I have asked several business men what actual good New England is getting

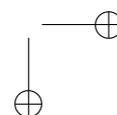
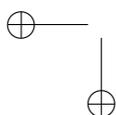


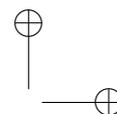
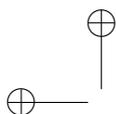


out of membership in the Union, and they could not think of any, even though they tried hard. As for myself, I can think of none. Secession would be impracticable, of course. New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania would take the lead in putting it down, naturally disliking the notion of being saddled with the whole upkeep of an enormous hobo hinterland. Yet the discussion would be good fun, and it might be salutary in waking people up to what is going on; though considering what sort of people we are, I rather doubt this.

10 July – I heard of a little girl, a dozen years old, of a poor family, who went to the funeral of a rich relative. She said afterward, “I looked down into the grave, and there she lay under a whole blanket of gardenias, and I thought how often I have wished I could have just one.”

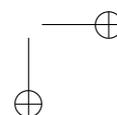
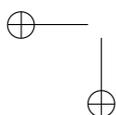
15 July – Work seems impossible in this weather; one can not make one’s mind go to any advantage or even to any purpose. What I do today will turn out to be so bad, I know, that it will have to be done all over afresh tomorrow; and unless the humidity lightens, that will also be quite as bad. On this section of the seaboard we seldom get any good from a fall in the summer temperature, for when it goes down, the humidity promptly goes up. It is no better in Narragansett, except for holiday-makers who have nothing to do but lie around on the beaches and cool off in the ocean when they feel like it. One who has work on hand is as well off in the city, for anything I can see, and in many respects much better.

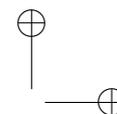




19 July – The American jargon is rapidly getting past me; I simply can not understand half of what I see in print nowadays. Today I noticed a placard in the subway, bearing the signature of the Commissioner of Public Welfare, whatever that is; somebody named William Hodson. His first sentence read, “There is a public or private agency in New York City where every person in need can be cared for.” I do not know what that means; no English-speaking person would know. What is a public or private agency? What single agency exists in New York that can care for every person in need? All one can do with stuff like this is to translate it into English by pure guesswork, for it is impossible to say whether the result represents what the writer had in mind. Again I wish there were some way of formally separating the two languages as Flemish and Dutch are separated, so that an understanding might be arrived at. At present, writers like William Hodson are supposed to be writing English. Probably most of our teachers and professors would say that the sentence I have just quoted is “bad English.” It is not; it is not good English; it is not any kind of English; it is American, and should be known as such, *semper, ubique et ab omnibus*. To say that Mr. Hodson’s sentence is in bad English is precisely as stupid as it would be to say that a Dutch sentence is in bad Flemish, and one would think twice, yea prayerfully, before saying that to a Dutchman.

20 July – Pondering Joubert’s observation that *l’expérience de beaucoup d’opinions donne à l’esprit beaucoup de flexibilité et l’affermit dans celles qu’il croit les meilleures*. How indeed is it possible really to know anything of



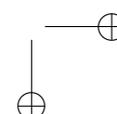
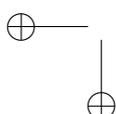


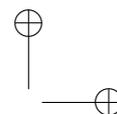
what is going on around one, or to understand the people one is most intimately thrown with, except by having traversed what Glanvill calls “the diverse climates of opinion”? How can one get that experience better than by reading; but by reading with *this purpose* to guide it?

21 July – Hitler’s doings excite wonder, and some horror; but why should they? Especially why should they in the country of Schiller?

Gefährlich ist’s, den Leu zu wecken,
Verderblich ist des Tigers Zahn;
Jedoch der schrecklichste der Schrecken,
Das ist der Mensch in seinem Wahn

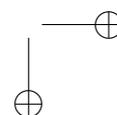
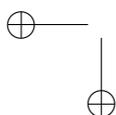
They are all a perfectly orderly consequence of antecedents that could bring forth no other. Deny the doctrine of natural rights, substitute the doctrine of Statism, and you are bound to have just what you see in Germany, Italy, Russia, the United States; there is no way out of it. What ought to be understood, and is not understood, is that Rooseveltism, Hitlerism, Stalinism, are all only local variants of the common doctrine that man has no natural rights but only such as are created for him by the State; the doctrine of State absolutism, formulated by the German idealist philosophers in the early part of the last century. The enforcement of this doctrine in America will cause us to see far more dreadful doings here than have taken place in Italy or Germany, and my private notion is that their time will not be long in coming.

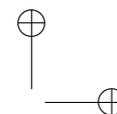




23 July – A publisher tells me that California is the best market for good books in the whole country, outside New England and New York. Yet one is tempted to think sometimes that California must breed fools much faster than one a minute – P. T. Barnum’s rate. People out there whom I have never seen or heard of write me most extraordinary letters. One reached me today, expressing dread of a revolutionary uprising; I have had several like that. Now how can a revolution take place in this country, or in any country where the populace is disarmed, and the police and military forces are well fed, well paid, and thoroughly loyal? The idea is fantastic; even Lucius Septimius Severus knew that, for the only advice he gave his sons was, “Stick together, pay the soldiers, and don’t worry about anything else.” With disaffection in the army and the police, a *coup d’état* is possible, but not a revolution even then, as we saw in the recent case of Russia; and without disaffection no *coup d’état* is possible except by purchase, and the opportunities for that are very infrequent. They can occur only in a “free democracy” like ours.

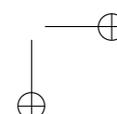
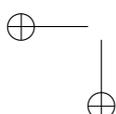
25 July – Dollfuss’s death removes an uninteresting figure. One dislikes to see him got rid of in that way, but otherwise one has little feeling about him, no more than one had about the removal of Wayne B. Wheeler, whom Dollfuss resembled in one point of policy. Dollfuss was always declaring that Austria was preponderantly anti-Nazi, but one could not help noticing that he would never let the thing go to a popular vote. Wheeler’s policy on Prohibition was always like that.

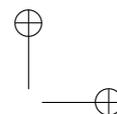
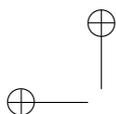




26 July – I see that a member of the Federal Relief Commission in North Dakota speaks of that State as a “Federal dependency.” So are quite a few others. How many States are not under actual carpet bag rule at the present time, and what is the actual reason for it, and what will be the inevitable consequence? This seems to me to be a most interesting set of questions, but I seldom hear them discussed or even raised. William Allen White is quoted as saying that we must make up our minds whether economic security is better than freedom, if we can’t have both. Bill is talking to the wrong kind of people; Americans have been too thoroughly conditioned to serf-mindedness to care two straws about freedom, whereas economic security exactly suits them, and they will cheerfully sacrifice all their other prospects in this world and all their hopes for the next, in their determination to get it. Bill is a fine fellow, and we all love to hear him chirp, but he doesn’t know his country’s history.

29 July – The *New York Times* prints a very good article on Charles de Kay, whom I had supposed everybody in the world had forgotten. How under the sun did that happen; and of all impossible places, in the *Times*? De Kay was one of four contemporaries who always stood in my mind as conspicuous examples of men born in the wrong place and at the wrong time; the others were Egan, Gilder and E. S. Nadal. They had gifts which in another society and at another period would have come out into something very fine; but in our society at the end of the last century they were suffocated. One gladly gives the literary editor of the *Times* a long mark for this venturesome performance, but one can not help

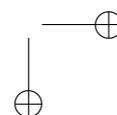
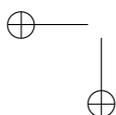


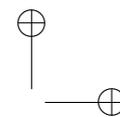
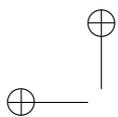


wondering what he heard from his superiors about it, if anything. I imagine John Finley may have had some sort of hand in it, for I think Finley rather likes to do a good thing once in a while, if he can get by with it, and he is enough of a man of letters to have known de Kay and taken his measure. I have known of Finley's using his position disinterestedly, once in a while, for very laudable purposes, and he should be especially praised for it because his position must be so dishevelling to decent instincts.

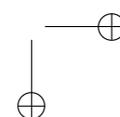
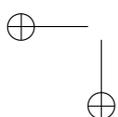
30 July – I counted twenty-five different State license plates in an hour's drive on the Narragansett shore road; some of them came from great distances, California, Texas, Florida, Alabama. I hear that the summer population at Narragansett and all the way beyond Point Judith has set a record this year, and thus the business it brought in has also made a record. Truly, the visible effects of this depression are very dreadful! Meanwhile the tides and surf continue uncommonly high, and the south winds bring clear weather, which is most unusual; the northeast winds bring hardly any rain. I think the corn will be poor this year. I saw a new type of morning glory, at least new to me, of an exquisite blue colour; I must get its name. I also saw a magnificent blue heron; he let me get quite close to him, and then rose slowly, apparently unafraid.

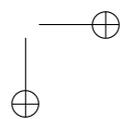
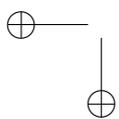
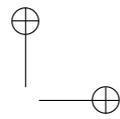
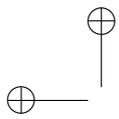
31 July – I see that a book by Herbert Hoover is announced as forthcoming, called *The Challenge to Liberty*. Think of a book on such a subject, by such a man! It makes one wonder how many people in this country

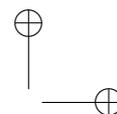




would read a treatise on liberty, written by a disinterested hand; I would put it at perhaps a thousand, although as Henry Adams said, "there is no such thing as an underestimate of average intelligence," so I may be wrong. The bad thing about our having been so long swamped with propaganda is that no one can write about any public question now without being under suspicion of having an ax to grind; and it is therefore impossible to get a serious and disinterested consideration for anything. Any one who mentions liberty for the next two years will be supposed to be somehow beholden to the Republican party, just as any one who mentioned it since 1917 was supposed to be a mouthpiece of the distillers and brewers.



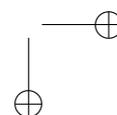
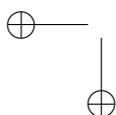


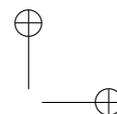
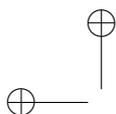


1934 August

2 August – Reading some outpourings in favour of the Child Labour Amendment sharpens my sense of the dreadful havoc worked by the unrestrained ascendancy of the “moral element” in a society. I remember a wise saying that I think covers their case, though I do not know who said it. “Virtue is more to be feared than vice, because its excesses are not subject to the regulation of conscience.” There seems no doubt about it.

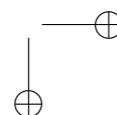
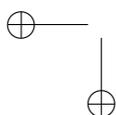
3 August – These tandem marriages are a curious thing and one would say they are futile. I have just been hearing about the adventures of one young couple, apparently very decent and useful members of society. They married happily, had no rows, but the young man suddenly got taken with another girl, also very decent, asked his wife for a divorce, got it, and married No. 2. Soon he was divorced again and took on No. 3, also an excellent person. Meanwhile No. 1 married again, shortly was divorced again, but now appears to have had enough of it and intends to play a lone hand. They are Southern people,

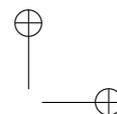




supposedly bred to monogamy, which makes the case conspicuous in a way, and not at all the kind of thing that comes out of Hollywood. I am all in favour of it, on every ground, social and moral, but I do not see why persons of those tendencies trouble about going through the motions of marrying; much better not, I should say, as things are regarded nowadays. I remember Alleyne Ireland's telling me about an interesting practice of a people or tribe that he had run across on his travels – Melanesians, Polynesians, something-or-other like that. An unmarried girl there could bring a boy home for the night as freely as an American girl could bring one home for lunch, and a different one each night, if she liked. There was never any pressure on her to marry, but if she married, they both had to stick. Ireland said, too, that he had remarked it as the most interesting feature of this social arrangement that the unmarried youngsters seldom took advantage of it; they seemed to have that sort of thing very little on their mind. One can see that it would pretty well work out that way, and why it would. It seems to me as sensible an arrangement as could be introduced among us, and after a generation or two had got used to it, I think the tone of our society would be much improved.

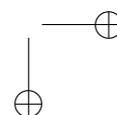
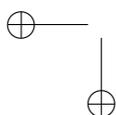
4 August – Poor old Ramsay MacDonald, marooned in Nova Scotia, with precious few to know, and fewer to care, whether he is ever returning to active life! England is a bad place for a man who lets his friends down or goes back on his class; that is, on the people whose interests he is supposed to stand for, and who have helped him up in the world. The English have their own way of

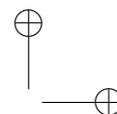




dealing with him; they do not lynch him or cashier him, and they do not exactly ostracize him, but they let him quietly rot down as he stands, and you somehow don't hear much of him any more. It is a good way.

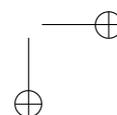
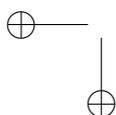
8 August – My first look at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Dr. Bell preached there; we were engaged for lunch after the services. A curious affair, that cathedral; most anomalous. I can feel at home in St. Patrick's or at the Old First, but not there. The trouble seems to be that they have a fine plant, but haven't got the kind of religion to go with it. What the place needs is a bishop like Wainwright or Horatio Potter, and about six real preachers, such as the Episcopal Church in New York could furnish in the last century with no trouble at all. Those brethren were saintly men who had been through the mill – I can remember a dozen of them, myself – and they proclaimed the Word with the bark on it. When they talked about the spiritual life, they knew what they were talking about because they got their knowledge out of experience and not by hearsay, and their congregations reacted accordingly. The Paulists and Jesuits can furnish that kind right now, plenty of them. Bishop Manning ought to bargain for a few, and while he is about it, he might get them to throw in another bishop like old Gibbons of Baltimore. Then he would have something which you could really call a cathedral. William Law hit off that kind of man perfectly in his *Answer to Dr. Trapp's Discourse*, when he said of the so-called mystical writers, "They were deeply learned in all the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God, not through the Use of *Lexicons*, or meditating upon

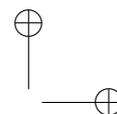




Critics, but because they had passed from Death unto life. They highly reverence and excellently direct the true Use of everything that is outward in Religion, but like the Psalmist's *King's Daughter*, they are *all glorious within*. They are truly Sons of *Thunder* and Sons of *Consolation*; they break open the *Whited Sepulchres*; they awaken the Heart and show its *Filth* and *Rottenness* of Death, but they leave it not till the Kingdom of Heaven is raised up within it. If a Man has no Desire but to be of the Spirit of the Gospel, to obtain all that Renovation of Life and Spirit, which alone can make him to be in Christ a new creature, it is a great unhappiness to him to be unacquainted with these Writers, or to pass a day without reading something of what they have written." The men I speak of filled that bill, although it may have been easier to fill in Law's time, just as it seems to have been easier to write the kind of English that Law wrote. I doubt it, though, for circumstances neither change much nor count much in respect of either job. Law's sentences have the dignity of the Lucretian hexameter; they will pretty nearly scan.

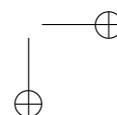
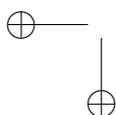
6 August – Curious, the sort of thing that people pick out for one to do. Dr. Bell is keen to have me write a book on practical religion, and I remember that Joel Spingarn tried for a couple of years to get me started on that notion, which seems to me the strangest thing in the world. What do I know about practical religion – an old rip like me? Nothing that would do anybody any good. Communicating a sense of practical religion is like communicating measles; you have to have it before you can give it to anybody. You may talk and write

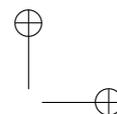
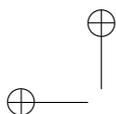




about measles as long as you live, but if you haven't got it nobody will catch it. Bell thinks I am the man for the job because I know so much literature on the subject. Well, so I do, I know it thoroughly, but that does not get anybody anywhere. If some one asked me how to get a sense of practical religion, I would tell him to look up a man who had it, not one who knew all about it. Sit at the feet of John Lloyd or Dr. Muhlenberg or old Charlie Randolph for a year or two, with your head in the ash-barrel, and you will get it.

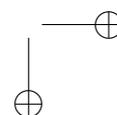
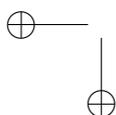
7 August – Still musing on that extraordinary cathedral; what an incredible affair it is! What a conspicuous example of the American way of dealing with everything that lies in the realm of the spirit, every spiritual activity. That is the way we deal with education, art, music, literature, what you will, with no consciousness whatever that the traffic in spiritual commodities is purely an affair of men who have such commodities to distribute. Our cathedrals, colleges, universities, etc., are simply so many magnificent steamships that do not carry an ounce of freight. The whole proper business of these concerns is a matter of men, but apparently no one has any idea that it is such, and therefore see what sort of sense of spiritual values it is that prevails among us, and what sort of men we have set up to interpret these values! Yale's "plant" of fifty years ago was not what it is since Mr. Harkness cathedralized it, but Yale had some men up there fifty years ago the like of whom it has not now, nor will have soon again, if ever. What a superb American poor old Simon Magus would have made! – we really ought to memorialize him in some public way.

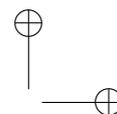




As the story turns out, he seems to have been honest, sincere and humble-minded as the day is long, but he simply had not the faintest notion of what it was that the Apostle was talking about, or of the type of action that it indicated for him.

9 August – Down in Narragansett I get a bird's-eye view of a good many youngsters who run from twelve to sixteen or so, and I am interested in the difference between them and the crop preceding them, in respect of money and the things it buys. Earlier generations in the same social class were brought up in an atmosphere of economic stability, where those who had money had it and expected to keep it. When a person lost his money in those days, it stirred up a good deal of comment and feeling, as something unusual. The children's general views of life reflected this situation. These children, on the other hand, bred in an atmosphere of instability, seem completely to disregard the possession of money by their associates, or the lack of it. Their unconcern is quite spontaneous, too; it is not an attitude that they have been taught to take. It is really a remarkable phenomenon, and one that I would not have believed without seeing it. They seem to get on as happily without money as with it, even those who might have it; and the extraordinary thing is that they get on without the thought of money. I wonder how general this attitude is throughout the country. These children mostly come of generations of gentlefolk, so they may be exceptional in this matter; I think they probably are.

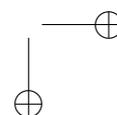
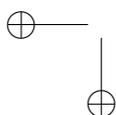


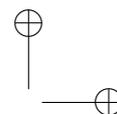
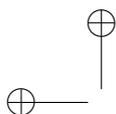


11 August – It is rather strange that foods of the same colour do not go together. Beans do not go well with peas, or squash with corn; even the combination of potatoes and turnips is nothing that one would hanker after. At the moment I can not think of any similar combination that is appetizing. I suppose this is a commonplace with cooks from all eternity, but I never came across any mention of it.

12 August – I have a letter complaining of an English usage in something or other I published; a very magisterial letter, yet the usage is correct and quite common. It was signed by some name like Finkelbein or Finkelstein – I could not quite make it out. I get such letters every now and then, and also letters instructing me in the principles of sound Americanism. I notice that they are almost invariably signed with names that suggest a very short acquaintance with America, and are couched in terms that betray an acquaintance with the English language that is even shorter. They give one a new point of view on America as the land of opportunity.

13 August – A candid examination of republicanism, as far as it has gone, disinclines one towards gambling heavily on its future. I have been considering the origins of the Second and Third Republics of France; what a filthy mess they are, and how different from the conventional account of them! Guizot was something of a theoretical republican at heart, but he had little use for “a republic which begins with Plato and ends necessarily with a policeman.” He said he was proud of having drafted the law of elementary education, but if he could have

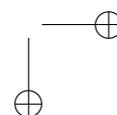
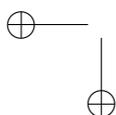


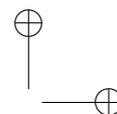


foreseen the uses made of it, and the uses likely to be made of it, he would rather have half of his countrymen “unable to tell the letter B from a bull’s foot.” That has a modern sound. Then the Third Republic! The breath was hardly out of the Second Empire’s body – in fact, not out of it – when the vultures of Delescluze, Blanqui, Félix Pyat, descended on the carcass, only to find themselves forestalled by the buzzards of Favre, Gambetta, Jules Simon and Co. already picking its bones. There was a fine time then between the two flocks of obscene birds, ending in a sort of compromise-division of carrion. What a crew!

14 August – A study of propaganda might reveal some interesting correspondences between language and character. The official German pronounces as he spells and spells as he pronounces, and he is correspondingly unhandy at indirection, notoriously so. The official Englishman, whose spelling and pronunciation have no relation to each other, is notoriously unhandy at anything else. One might almost say that the genius of his language makes him a successful propagandist, and the German’s genius makes him unsuccessful. The Englishman, though, pays a price for his advantage, because in the long run he becomes known as a common liar, while the German does not.

15 August – I deteriorate with astonishing rapidity when separated from my books, and am never aware that I have done so until I come back to them; I deteriorate in temper as well as in other ways, for I miss the peculiarly powerful sustaining and calming power of literary studies.

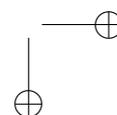
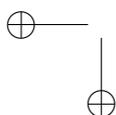


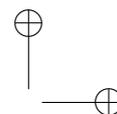
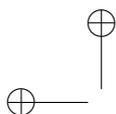


I never felt quite sure of Cicero's quality as a philosopher, still less as a man of letters; but that he understood this power and was to some degree touched by it, there can be no doubt. *Haec studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem ablectant, secundas res ornant, adversis solatium praebent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernociant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur.* The *non impediunt foris* is the main trouble these days; they are often crowded out by the inroads of silly dissipations. Yet this is a matter of one's own feeble will.

16 August – I dislike early rising, and am never good at it, not through laziness, but by nature, apparently, for my mother told me I was so as a little baby, and always afterward. Still, I can get up early, by an effort, and often do. About this time or a little later, however, towards the turn of the year, there is a stretch of some weeks when the thing is worse than impossible, for if I attempt it I am in a sort of somnambulist's trance all day, without a single serviceable faculty. I can not account for this.

17 August – A strange sort of plant-devouring bug has put in an appearance at Narragansett this year. It is a rectangular-built creature, with black and silver coloration; it looks curiously new-arty. It attacks a leaf in a way that suggests a military formation, a line of them covering the outside edge, and working towards the centre with great precision. They are hardy fellows, not responding to the sprays that are usually effective. The summer birds have long disappeared, giving place to a less pleasant lot; all the autumn birds have a harsh,

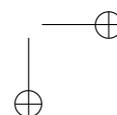
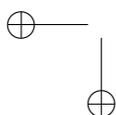


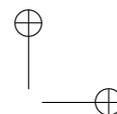


squawking note, that is, the larger ones have; the little ones have a dry chirp, quite unmusical. Two or three years ago some officious ass took me to task in the *New York Times* for saying that woodpeckers drilled in the eaves and ridgepoles of houses. If he had been sleeping where I have these past two nights he would have learned something about that, unless he is the sort that is incapable of learning anything, which after all I suspect he may be. This woodpecker went to work at daybreak on the eaves ten feet from my bed, and when driven off he returned next morning. He suspended operations then, but the following morning he sat on the window sill, contemplating the interior of my room, apparently with disfavour.

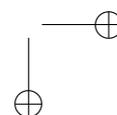
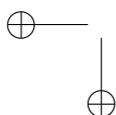
20 August – Back from a delightful two days on the Cape, with my friend Charles Nagel, and his charming family. Much talk about public affairs. He is still hopeful for the success of what we call republican institutions, as I see no reason to be. It might be more accurate to say that he still hopes the present course of our collective life may be halted and reversed, or somehow deflected towards a less calamitous end; and I do not see the faintest chance of either. I came back from Marion by way of Newport, and looked inside Trinity Church, a most interesting building. Somebody has had the bad taste to put a cross and two candles on the communion table. If they were removed, and one memorial tablet, also in execrable taste, the interior would be really quite perfect.

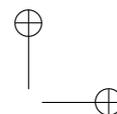
21 August – My acquaintance with the Nagels has been one of the most rewarding and improving experiences





of my life. I wish Charles Nagel could be got to record anecdotes of his association with William H. Taft, for Taft is so much worth reappraisal, and no one could do it better. Verily Michel Chevalier was right in saying that our society has the morale of an army on the march; Taft's case is a good proof of it. An army on the march has no use for the memory of men who have distinguished themselves in any but a prescribed and conventional way, and with reference to the army's immediate objective; it tramples them into obscurity and forgets them. In talking about public affairs with Mr. Nagel, I was reminded of Plato's discussion of the wise man's attitude towards them. Plato says that the wise and disinterested are so few and so weak as against the bulk and madness of the masses, that they are like a man caught amidst wild beasts. "He will not join them," Plato says, and he might have added that he will be devoured if he tries; "and he is too helpless to do anything against them." So if he moves either way, he would perish to no purpose. All he can do is to stand from under, "as it were in the lee of a wall during a hurricane." In the circumstances, that was sound doctrine. It was what prompted Socrates, when he was reproached for standing aloof from Athenian politics, to say it was for that very reason that he and his followers were the best politicians in Athens. They saw what was coming, and knew that nothing could be done about it. It is interesting, that as well as one can judge, no two administrators in history resemble each other more closely than Eubulus and Mr. Roosevelt; and that in principle no two administrations are more alike than theirs.

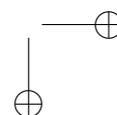
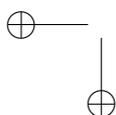


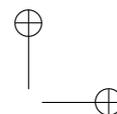


22 August – An excellent show of old silver at Kingston. It seems odd to think that in Colonial times, Kingston (then called Little Rest) was the seat of celebrated silversmiths. The other day I heard the Narragansett district described as the Cavalier region of New England, and the description struck me as fairly plausible; the general type of industry seems to bear it out. Kingston, for instance, made a whole line of goods that the “quality” would be supposed to want – silverware, beaver hats, furniture, etc. – and the atmosphere of “quality” still prevails there; one is more conscious of it there, I think, than in any other Rhode Island town – more by far than in Newport.

23 August – Down Point Judith way the marsh mallows are a pretty sight among the cattails, and there is a pretty growth of marsh heather. Buckeyes have begun to shed their leaves. One reason why European towns look desolate so early in the autumn is that they have so many horse chestnuts and Scotch elms.

24 August – I see that a Liberty League has been formed, with Jouett Shouse at the helm, and John W. Davis, Nathan Miller, Wadsworth and Al Smith as charter members. *Vilesцит origine tali*. I have heard of several people as being keen about it, not one of whom I believe to have an honest hair in his head. However, while I don't think there is likely to be much disinterested patriotism anywhere about it, and certainly none among its promoters, there may be some. However that turns out, the thing may open the way occasionally for something better than *ad captandum* expressions, something a little more intelligent and objective than the dreary run of

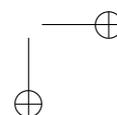
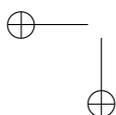


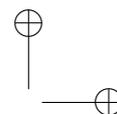


propagandist outpouring. One should think so, anyway, until the contrary is proven. I shall look into it as soon as I go to New York, and if a proper chance is open, I shall lend it a hand.

26 August – Last night I went down to the summer theatre on Browning’s Beach, to see a play called *The Party’s Over*, and had more fun out of it than I have had in a long time. The theatre is made of a large barn, with a structure that looks like a grain elevator built on the end of it, in which the scenery is run up and down on pulleys. The building is remarkably well appointed and has perfect acoustics. The actors are all professional, brought here for the season; they seem to enjoy themselves thoroughly, they are very capable, and the pleasant intimacy of the situation gave zest to a capital show, so much more agreeable in every way and really interesting than one gets in town. The play was a fairly good reflection of the boorishness and vulgarity of some “modern” youngsters, and while it was dirty in spots, it was not gratuitously so. The audience was made up mostly of local people from the outlying districts, country folk, and I thought again of what a fine thing these summer theatres are in giving them their chance at such good stagecraft. They seemed to be very appreciative.

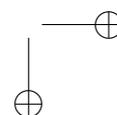
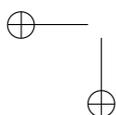
27 August – At the Dunes Club yesterday for lunch with Christiane, and a glance at the summer crowd, which I found entertaining; a different-looking show from the kind that the Pier used to put on in the old days, but interesting in its way. Generally speaking, the beauty and chivalry of the New Deal period seems to breed

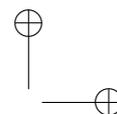




back to the kind of thing that made up the court of Louis-Philippe; which is quite all right, of course. The club itself is the best-planned, best-equipped and best-managed thing of its kind that I ever saw – which is not saying much for it, I know, since I have seen very few – and its situation is simply superb. I was greatly impressed. What pleased me most was to find that the coterie or house-party idea does not prevail; I should say, properly, the herd-idea. There is no social pressure urging people into class formation, after the Elk-Rotarian fashion. This laudable spirit is in the best tradition of the South County, and as Christiane says, it makes the club somewhat resemble a European institution. South County people in the same social stratum have always lived at considerable distances from one another, as in Virginia. I believe that the social effect of this segregation has never been as thoroughly studied as it should be. Mr. Jefferson thought the human spirit could not reach its best development under any other conditions, and I should say that the mere passage of time has proved him right.

28 August – Last month's reports show that the New Deal has added 95,000 jobholders to a bureaucracy already monstrously swollen. What an egregious performance! I am all for it, however, because the faster things go, the sooner they will blow up. I only hope they go on as they are going until the next election is over, for I want to see Roosevelt safely in his second term. I hear there are no campaign funds for the Congressional elections this fall. Why should any one contribute, since Congress has

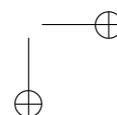
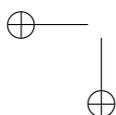


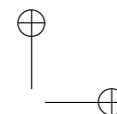


no longer any significant functions? The Executive has absorbed them all.

29 August – In Boston, with my old friend Sedgwick and his associates. Returned to Narragansett in time for dinner. Afterwards to the theatre at Browning’s Beach, to see *The Family Upstairs*, a thin comedy. I was struck with the enjoyment one gets out of even a poor play when done under these circumstances. The suffocating air of professionalism keeps me away from the theatre in New York even more than the inconveniences of going and coming. The actors here are professionals, but do not act like professionals; they act like folks having a good time. Victorious human nature, again – what a marvellous thing it is! One understands the charm of the mediaeval theatre, and of the early Renaissance French theatre that Cassandre loves to dwell on. It must have been full of the kind of thing one gets a taste of here.

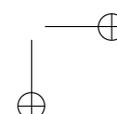
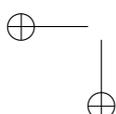
30 August – Pure October weather. The local weather-sharps who predicted a red-hot July and a cold August hit the mark exactly. One wonders how they strike it as often as they do. One of the funniest things in political history is Upton Sinclair’s winning the Democratic nomination in California. I have wasted most of the morning in laughing at it. I wonder what Jim Farley had for breakfast, and whether he worried any of it down – and kept it down. What a community California must be! If Mr. Jefferson’s guess was right, that the other planets use this one for a lunatic asylum, California would surely be the ward for incurable idiocy. Hollywood – “criminal syndicalism” – Upton Sinclair – Aimée McPherson – the erstwhile Rolph

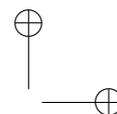




– Los Angeles – Mooney – Brother Hoover – what an inconceivable human aggregation all that must represent! Well, God’s will be done! If what Mrs. Malaprop called an unscrupulous Providence would have it so, so be it. One surveys it with no stronger feeling than reverent amazement, for one is simply unequal to entertaining any other.

31 August – Leaving for New York today, in great dissatisfaction, to be tied to the public libraries, which are infested with Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics, such as orthodox members of the Church of England are supposed to pray for in the Good Friday collect. I heard two days ago that my little book is off the press, and I am keen to see how the beautiful illustrations have come out. It was unspeakably good of R. R. to do them for me; I can never be grateful enough. I wish her old master, Philip Hale, were alive to see them, and to see her quiet, diligent progress since they were done. I never knew a more disinterested, single-hearted love for art than hers, nor an attitude more unselfconscious and exacting towards a proficiency in any art.

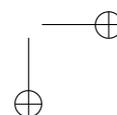
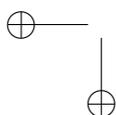


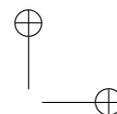
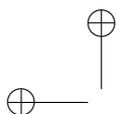


1934 September

1 September – The letters that people write to the newspapers, calling on Roosevelt to give them an “assurance” about this-or-that, show such invincible ignorance that they almost make a Calvinist of me. “Assurance” about the currency, the tariff, the government’s progress towards collectivism, and so on. Now, just what would an assurance from Roosevelt amount to, if he gave one? He gave assurances enough during his campaign, and what were they worth? Exactly what any jobseeker’s assurances are ever worth. Mr. Roosevelt has never been known to the public in any capacity but that of a jobholder or jobhunter, and the American public has had a century-and-a-half’s experience to prove that a jobholder or jobhunter is invariably, first and foremost, a common liar. One wonders how the proverb about the burnt child dreading the fire ever got into currency, for there is very little truth in it.

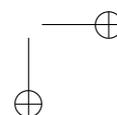
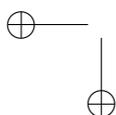
2 September – I am beginning to be a little worried over the question whether Roosevelt’s subsidized voters are

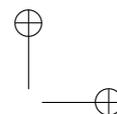




going to stay bought. The Republicans will certainly offer to outbid him, and I am afraid they will win some of them away. The reports I hear from the West are none too encouraging; still, as things stand now, he could hardly lose. But I don't like these strikes, for however they turn out, they set up an atmosphere of restlessness and distraction that is bound to be unfavorable to the Administration. I would like to see things go to pot in an orderly way, so that the Administration's case would be clear. If the threatened textile strike comes off, it will make a bad mess, especially if the Relief Administration surreptitiously underwrites it, which I am half afraid they will do.

4 September – Mussolini surely spiked Hitler's guns. As long as things apparently must go the way they are going, I am not so sorry to see the Italian once more rehabilitated to the point where he can cut a figure in international affairs. The erstwhile humble Wop has been laying up a good deal of character during all these years when he was out of everybody's reckoning, and now it seems to be making him something to be taken into account. A century ago, whenever any treaty brought a European monarch out the small end of the horn, he was compensated with a slice out of Italy. The English came into Naples with a supercilious air, and told the inhabitants that they ought to clean things up and treat their horses better. The biddable Dago took himself at other peoples' valuation. He accepted himself as ignoble, lazy, dirty, Mafia-ridden and dishonest, and that was that. Maybe something like Fascism was necessary to transform him – who knows? – or, I should say, to put

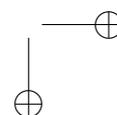
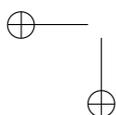


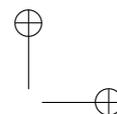
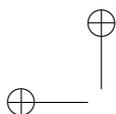


his transformation into action and make it effective. One hates to think so, yet one has the chastening reflection that God moves in a mysterious way, etc.

6 September – Huey Long’s incredible doings in Louisiana raise the question why one should pick on Hitler, and the further question whether self-righteousness is ever anything but a sawdust asset. One thinks, too, that when Al Capone takes a look at Long, Hitler, *et id genus omne*, he must feel like a wretched piker. What might he now have been if he had only gone about things the right way!

7 September – If I am any dab at a guess, the American vocabulary is going to be strained until its seams bust, some three years from now, when people really wake up and express themselves about Mr. Roosevelt. By comparison, the name of Woodrow Wilson will be a sweet and beautiful memory, in respect of actual damage done. It will take about that long, I fancy, for us to find out what a capital levy of forty-one cents in the dollar really means, and above all, what we have got in return for it. But resentment will evaporate in bad language, and perhaps a vote to bring on another “change of impos-tors,” as John Adams said, such being the American way. How interesting it is, that in this most pretentious and swaggering country, a man can get himself elected to any kind of office on the strength of any kind of promises, then disregard them at his utter pleasure, with no action taken, or even any notice taken!

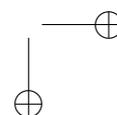
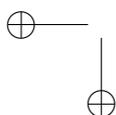


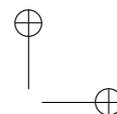


8 September – An interesting experience. After a few words on public affairs, X remarked, “The real trouble is that the average American is a congenital crook.” It startled me a little, because X never impressed me as a very perspicacious person. I was struck, too, the other day, when Y, who likewise never appeared the sort to set the river afire, casually called Roosevelt’s misfeasances with the currency by their right name of capital tax. The point is that when men like X and Y talk that way, the cat may be wriggling out of the bag. It does not do to be too hopeful, and say that when it is out, something may begin to be done; but one is safe in saying that nothing can be done until it is out – which is of course a very different story.

10 September – Something put me in mind today of Cassandre’s interesting observation that there seems to be some sort of relationship between indifference to squalor and the love of beauty. Traditionally, the artist is taken for granted as living in filth and disorder, and never washing. Also it seems that the parts of the world where the highest regard for beauty prevails are usually very dirty and squalid. Cassandre pretends that this correspondence of the two tendencies is probably natural, cleanliness being a newly acquired trait, apparently quite foreign to man in his natural state; and the artistic temperament is the one that is especially predisposed to revert to nature. This is plausible, and there may be something in it.

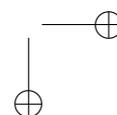
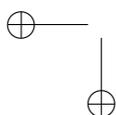
11 September – Every day I am impressed anew by the lack of intellectual integrity in people who, one

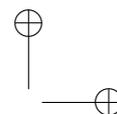




would think, should have it. There is a certain softness about it that I find disagreeable. If we had a modern Celsus, he might write a very brilliant chapter on the *κουφοτης τω Αμερικω*. K. and L. in conversation this evening agreed fully that Roosevelt's whole pre-Presidential record marked him as nothing in the world but an unscrupulous and self-seeking fellow, but they said they believed that when he became President he put all that behind him like another Henry V, and was out disinterestedly for the public good – and this in the face of the unconscionable Farley, and Roosevelt's own intervention in the Maine campaign, which was as flagrant and flagitious a piece of vote-buying as was ever seen anywhere in the world! What can any one think of that sort of pulpy self-deception? Back in the seventeenth century Bishop Butler laid down the greatest lesson in intellectual integrity ever put before people of our race and speech: "Things and actions are what they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be; why then should we desire to be deceived?" It seems impossible, however, for Americans even to learn from Emerson that cause-and-effect is the chancellor of God; but as an Iron Chancellor its works and ways make those of Prince de Bismarck look like cheap failures.

13 September – Iolanthe last night, in the cycle of Gilbert and Sullivan that D'Oyly Carte's troupe from the Savoy is giving here. I am presumptuous to say so, no doubt, but I am sure I have heard the thing better done. The reviewers are touting the troupe in what seems to me an uncritical way, almost servile, so if it be true that they are infallible, my judgment must be wrong. How-

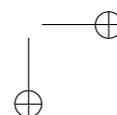
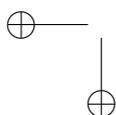


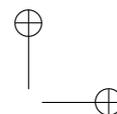


ever, Gilbert and Sullivan, even indifferently done, are more than worth an evening. Besides, I remember Cassandre's saying, after a wretched performance at the Opéra-Comique, that it is a good thing to sit through a poor rendering once in a while, just to help one realize how good the best is.

14 September – The hideous wreck of the *Morro Castle* shows how thoroughly corrupt the ethics of business are. Rea Irvin asked me today whether a thing like that could happen on a Dutch ship. I doubt it. The *Morro Castle* was built on American specifications, which allow a great deal of wood in the interior and superstructure; and its whole personnel seems to have been incompetent, disorganized and untrustworthy. Apparently the acting captain did as well as any one could, considering the owners' attitude towards salvage and the unreliability of his crew. It would be as easy to build an unburnable ship as an unsinkable ship; both are perfectly practicable, but an unsinkable ship would be inconvenient for passengers to get about in, and a fireproof ship would not be so pretty and would have fewer gadgets for passengers to play with. It would be an interesting experiment if some line put one fireproof and unsinkable ship into commission, to see what patronage it would get.

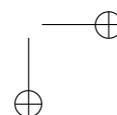
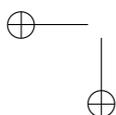
15 September – With all deference to dissenting opinion, I say that the Communists are the most useful citizens we have. How could we have a strike or a food riot, or an incident like that of the *Morro Castle*, if we had no Communists? Governor Green, of Rhode Island, I see, was prompt to the minute with the right kind of talk

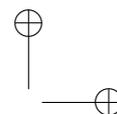




about Communists in the textile strike up there, and he was hot after calling in Federal troops, but his legislature would not back him up, and he was left looking pretty cheap. There is amusement in this for any one who knows Rhode Island at all. It is the one State whose governor has no power or authority – practically none – but is in all essential respects a purely ornamental figure; and it is *vox populi* almost unanimously that Mr. Green fills the bill very well as a decorative person and also as a prize ass. I heard this on all sides when he took office; he got into a mess at once over some appointments. I did not pay much attention at the time, but his carryings-on over this textile strike seem to show that part of his reputation, at least, is honestly come by.

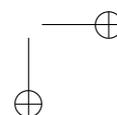
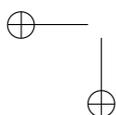
16 September – A fine sprightly performance of *Pinafore* last night. I think this is the best of Gilbert and Sullivan's operettas. This troupe leaves something to be desired in the way of singing, the women especially, as I thought when I heard *Iolanthe* the other night. Still, the music of *Pinafore* makes pretty heavy demands on the average musical-comedy voice. It is odd that I should know the music of *Pinafore* throughout, with not the faintest idea of when or how I learned it; I never saw a performance until last night. I think, however, that my musical memories may be a little unusual. My earliest recollection is of a melody in the finale of the third act of *La Traviata*. I was then about three years old. Between three and ten a number of airs from operas and operettas fixed themselves in my memory from hearing them hummed about the house – airs of Offenbach, Halévy, Lecocq. My father was one of eight children, my

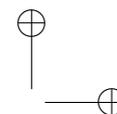




mother one of ten; all but two on each side had superb voices and excellent musical taste, my parents perhaps the best of the lot. They gave me everything in music except a voice; I have, one might say, no voice at all, to my great regret. The love of music ran especially deep in my mother's family, however, and I am thankful that I inherited it in full. Another thing that ran very deep in her family was the ability to write; not one of them but who could write admirably. Since then I noticed that the name of Jay seems to be a mark of good writing. Mr. Jefferson said that John Jay wielded "the best pen in America," and apparently he did. Among contemporaries, John Jay Chapman wrote admirably, and so did William Jay Gaynor. I am said to write well, and I see that Ellery Sedgwick has just now dug up another member of the tribe to appear in the *Atlantic*, Elizabeth Jay Etnier, who writes extremely well and gracefully.

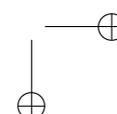
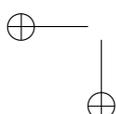
17 September – Two hours last evening with a young man just back from a couple of years in Germany. He has been in a position to know the new régime unusually well, and his accounts of it are hard to listen to. He spoke very objectively; according to him, Hitler really has the support of the great body of the nation, which is almost incredible. What he says of men whom I know, and who are enthusiastically behind Hitler, is especially hard to believe; yet I have no doubt it is all true enough. I saw so many lunatic Americans during the war that I ought to be ready to believe anybody capable of any kind of lunacy, but I did think better of these Germans whom I know. This young man was glad to leave Germany, and though he has lived there for years, he has no desire

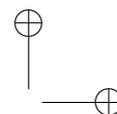




ever to go back. He said, "It is bad enough to have your friends killed, but when your friends are out killing people all night, that is too much." He spoke of this quite dispassionately, with no rancour; one could see that his experiences had put him above that. Curiously, he says that while Hitler's lieutenants are mostly a hard lot, Hitler himself is really a very good fellow, as good a type of pure zealot, probably, as exists. Well; one could say something in that way for Robespierre, no doubt. I went away thoroughly out of heart and depressed, and have not recovered my spirits all day.

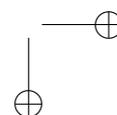
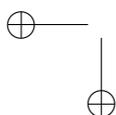
18 September – In talking with F. about the evidence in the case of the *Morro Castle*, he said, "I know it is a perfectly horrible thing to say, but the whole affair leaves me cold. I have no feeling whatever about it. I got all that sort of thing out of my system during the war." I reminded him of the blanket of gloom that settled over the whole country when the Titanic sank, and he recalled it at once as one of the most interesting phenomena in our history, showing by comparison how insensitive to mass disaster we have become. "But," he said, "you must remember that then we had one foot on top of the world, and the other all but. The perfection of human nature in a perfected human society was only a matter of the next few months. We were all like Mark Twain on top of the Rigi watching the sunrise and worshipfully thinking how grand it was, only to discover in a minute or so that he had slept all day, and that what he was looking at was the sunset."

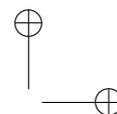




20 September – The Jewish holiday Yom Kippur yesterday closed New York up as tight as a white-oak knot. One would say there was not a hundred dollars' worth of business done in all the town. It sets one's mind back on Hitler's policy. The question is not what one thinks of it as an American, but what one would think of it if one were a German in Germany, where the control of cultural agencies is so largely in the hands of Jews – the press, drama, music, education, etc. – and where there is, or was, a superb native culture essentially antithetical. Is one's own culture worth fighting for? I think so. I think I would fight for it. I would not fight for territory, trade expansion or the greed of profiteers, but I think I would fight for culture. That seems to be what peoples like the Catalans and Irish have always done, and there is a fine irony in the fact that materialized and brutalized peoples like the British and ourselves have never been able to get through their heads why the Irish should fight, in any given instance, or what they had to fight about. Give them redress of their material grievances and offer them advantageous trade terms – what more can any people want? The Irish wanted something more than that, and wholly different; and so, possibly, do the Germans.

22 September – One good result of Prohibition is that women now go into saloons on equal terms with men, and with no more self-consciousness about it than they have about going into a dry-goods store. This apparently tends to civilize our drinking practices somewhat. Women got used to mixing with men in the speak-easies, and now they do it openly. This is what I notice in New



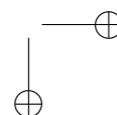
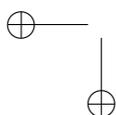


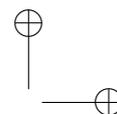
York, at least; I do not know what they do in other parts of the country.

23 September – The Senate's investigation of the traffic in munitions has given publicity to a great deal of useful knowledge, but I do not think it will affect the prospects of disarmament in the least. All the talk about disarmament is thoroughly dishonest, and has proved so, again and again. As long as you have nations, you will have armaments; and as long as you have nationalism, you will have nations; and you will have nationalism as long as the existing theory of the State predominates. Therefore any talk about disarmament, even if sincere, is superficial and puerile.

24 September – There is a curious irony in the fact that the mystery of the Lindbergh extortion case is being unravelled through the suspect's possession of gold certificates. Roosevelt forcibly robbed the American people of nearly half their gold values, and thereby this minor swindle comes to light; it is a new version of the old adage that it takes a thief to catch a thief. I am against robbery, wherever found, but I confess that as long as Roosevelt and Co. are at large, my sympathy is with Hauptmann, as it was with Capone while Hoover, Mellon and Co. were at large.

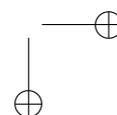
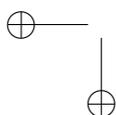
25 September – The revenue from liquor taxes has not come up to expectations, and bootlegging still goes on. The businesslike way to deal with this would be to reduce the taxation. The political way is to keep the taxes ridiculously high, and increase the force of officials to

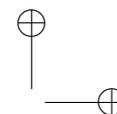




run down bootleggers. It is needless to observe that the Treasury has chosen to follow the political way, because it enlarges the range of patronage, enhances corruption, and strengthens the party machine. In a private organization, a policy like this would be suicidal; the contrast is significant. One would think people might sometime be led to fathom out the underlying reason why, in general, political organization thrives on policies that would be fatal to non-political organization; and whether *ipso facto* political organization is not inimical to society.

26 September – A sweet-mannered German girl stopped me today to ask a direction. Her English was rather broken, so I replied in German, and walked a block with her to put her on her way. She asked me presently if I were German, and seemed astonished when I told her I was not. I have several times had this experience of being casually taken for a German by Germans, on the strength of my speech, and I think it is because I began to learn German quite young – about eleven, as I remember, and got it from cultivated Hanoverians. I know the French language rather better than German, I think, but speak it barbarously, managing the Italian intonation much better, though I do not know Italian nearly so well. But I could never think it worth while to make much effort after what the schools call “a good pronunciation,” for one uses foreign languages chiefly for literary purposes; for conversation it is enough if one can get oneself easily understood.

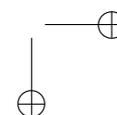
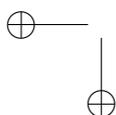


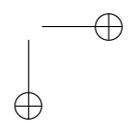
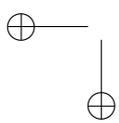
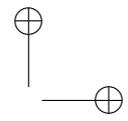
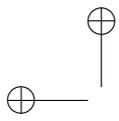


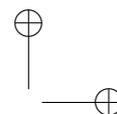
27 September – Our regular spell of “Labour Day weather” has come late this year. We are in the midst of it now, and it is most enervating and depressing.

28 September – I wonder sometimes – though knowing our public as I do, I should not – why so few people seem aware that the principle of absolutism was introduced into the Constitution by the income-tax amendment. I notice today that some Senator is fathering an antiwar bill, which proposes to double the tax on all incomes below \$10,000, and take 98 per cent of all that are above that figure; this raise to become effective on the day the United States declares war. This would be constitutional; it would be constitutional for Congress to take 100 per cent of all income, at any time. Then the only thing needful to make Louis XIV look cheap would be for Congress to vote the disbursing power into the President’s hands, as an indirectly subsidized Congress, like the present one, could be counted on to do.

29 September – A very fine performance of *Princess Ida* last night. If there were any power of self-criticism in England, every girls’ school in the country would have closed the day after that opera was first put on. In fact, I can see how the Empire could have stood up under any strain of war without and knavery within, but I can’t see for the life of me how it ever stood up against Gilbert and Sullivan.



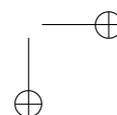
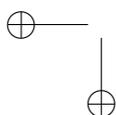


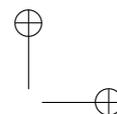
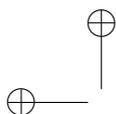


1934 October

1 October – The problem of “relief” seems still to be a problem, and it will continue to be one until it is solved in a way that nobody will like. No country was ever yet rich enough to feed all its idle people, nor is ours. When Rome began to subsidize its populace, it signed its own death certificate, and our bold start on “unemployment relief” last year was a signal to the undertaker to clear for action. The candidates for “relief” are as many now as ever, some say more; their keep has to be paid for out of production, and production is steadily going downhill, just as any one with half a mind would know it must – and there you are! Neither tendency can be stopped, nor can their consequences be averted, though we may yet have a boom or two to bolster up our inveterate unwillingness to face reality; the gods apparently love to meet our extravagances with a fine irony.

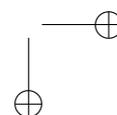
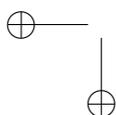
2 October – Johnson is out, and the NRA seems to be going the way of all flesh. The Administration is evidently feeling some adverse pressure as the election

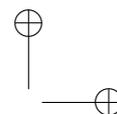




comes on, and is evidently trying to be as good as it can; Roosevelt is ladling out brimstone and treacle over the radio, like Mrs. Squeers, while Farley goes about the country organizing raids on the Federal Treasury. In a talk with G. D. yesterday, he told me that when he came out of college Roosevelt was secretary of the Harvard Club, and the general feeling was that the job was too big for him. G. D. said he would like to believe that Roosevelt is sincere and honest, but merely too ignorant to know what he is about. Any one would like to believe this, but evidence is too much against it. Mr. Jefferson said with profound truth that “when once a man has cast a longing eye on offices, a rottenness begins in his conduct”; and it would follow that he must have the root of that sort of thing somewhere in him, or he would never begin seeking offices.

3 October – Persecuted by a sudden hard cold, my first of the season; rather a depressing day on other accounts, it being my mother’s birthday. At lunch with John Wheeler-Bennett, a prepossessing young English writer on international affairs. He knows our history extremely well, and is especially interested in the diplomatic history of the Confederacy; a good subject for a competent writer. I was thinking later in the day of the curious coincidence in the courses of Greek and Latin poetry; they were like candles that gutter along for a while, then give one bright flash, and go out. After a long run of decadence and debasement, Claudian and Cometas Chartularius revived the classic spirit and the classic form; and they were the last of their line.

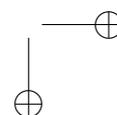
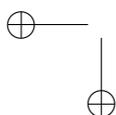


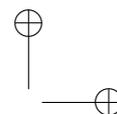


4 October – I hear that a good many people speak well of my new book, and like it, and I believe the newspapers are generally favourable to it – I am told so – though I have not got around to look up their reviews. Mr. and Mrs. Evans and Miss Winsor are charming about it, and Dr. Bell wrote me with great truth that the text was very good, but nothing to compare with the illustrations. He is quite right; those illustrations ought to carry any book, and as a critic I should say that by comparison my book is not by any means as good, but amply good enough not to let the reader down.

6 October – I wonder whether our popular saying, “Let George do it,” is borrowed from history, or agrees with it by a mere coincidence. George d’Amboise got his rise in the world at Rouen, became the favourite minister of the kindly, slow-moving “Father of the People,” Louis XII, and really governed the kingdom. When anything was to be done, Louis always said “*Laissez faire à Georges*,” and the saying became a byword. Was it picked up here and continued, or did it have an independent origin?

8 October – In the South County for the week. A flock of strange birds pulled up here for an hour on their way south. I thought they were cowbirds, but they were not; I could not make them out. I saw a junco, evidently down from the north. None of the animals here are growing half as heavy a winter coat as I saw on them last year, and the weather last winter was uncommonly severe. One hardly sees how Nature could serve such long notice, so there may be nothing in this to base a

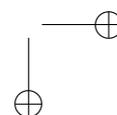
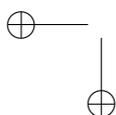


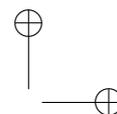


prediction on, though I believe rural people sometimes set considerable store by it.

9 October – I have been reading *The Woman in White*, and found it as fascinating as when I was a boy. Comparing it with the few modern mystery stories that I have read, I find that the latter are more skeletonized, and depend more on vivid incident than on delineation of character to carry interest. The Sherlock Holmes stories are to some extent an exception. All the characters in Collins's novel are admirably drawn, so that they stay in one's memory, as those in the ordinary run of mystery fiction do not. This is nothing against them, however, for modern mystery stories do not pretend to be anything but puzzles, and as such they are usually pretty good; at least, those I have read seemed good.

10 October – This afternoon I picked up a short, unpretentious novel that T. had lying about, and read it through with a good deal of interest and pleasure. It is called *Penang Appointment*, an English work that T. brought over with him the other day. I was attracted to it by the publishers' notice on the dust-jacket, which said that since the author was a member of the firm they were precluded from giving their own opinion of the book, but if reviewers gave any opinions they would print them on subsequent jackets. This struck me as such uncommonly good taste that I suspected that the book was probably worth reading, as indeed I found it was. The regular thing, I should suppose, would be to send around some presentation copies and get advance opinions to print.



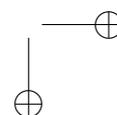
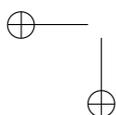


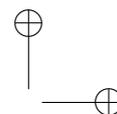
I would like to deal with those publishers; one would naturally think well of them, on the evidence offered.

11 October – The assassination of King Alexander set me to reading Louis Adamic's book on Jugoslavia. It is exceedingly interesting, and reveals a good character in the author, as well as considerable ability. He has done a most useful piece of interpretation, and done it clearly and well. I was already convinced that Alexander had got what was due him – what he had been asking for ever since he took the throne – and this seems to be Adamic's notion also.

12 October – There was never a more magnificent day. I drove some fifty miles this afternoon, mostly over back roads, and I have rarely seen finer colours in the foliage. The oaks have not turned yet, and it seems to me that the rest are turning a little early. The strong sun gave the leaves a waxy look that was beautiful beyond description. One maple tree I shall never forget; the core of its foliage was still bright green, and filigreed around with red and yellow splashes. It is interesting that the poisonous vegetation has the most gorgeous colouring of all – poison ivy, swamp sumach, nightshade, etc. I saw some blue jays, almost the most beautiful of birds, and about the most disagreeable. I return to New York tomorrow, unhappily.

14 October – I think the idea must prevail pretty generally that cold is harder to bear than heat. I notice that on a railway car, twenty passengers may complain that the car is overheated, but if one complains of being cold, the

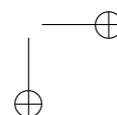
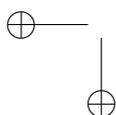


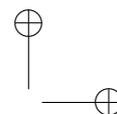


heat is left on and the complaint of the twenty goes for nothing.

15 October – One of New York’s most influential music reviewers says that the works of Gilbert and Sullivan are the only classics of operetta, which strikes me as an astonishing position to take. There was a feller by the name Offenbach *von unsere Leut*, what came from Köln in *Deutschland*, understand me, and wrote French operettas which you could really say was classical; also Halévy, and *doch a französischer* feller by the name Lecocq, what wrote *The Little Duke*. The statement may have been due to hasty writing; perhaps the reviewer was thinking only of English operetta, but at that, if ballad-opera be reckoned as operetta, as it often is, he runs aground on *The Beggar’s Opera*.

17 October – Jim Farley is promising huge slices of Federal money to State candidates, part down, and the balance after election, i.e., after the votes are delivered. This is as interesting a combination of bribery and blackmail as I ever heard of; yet no one seems to regard it as anything remarkable, except Republican jobseekers who would do the same thing *con amore* if they had the chance. Mr. Jefferson said that our government would pass to destruction by way of “consolidation, first, and then corruption, its necessary consequences.” This sort of thing has been so well done that by now, as I heard said the other day, “the average American is a congenital crook.”

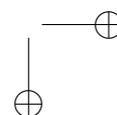
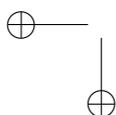


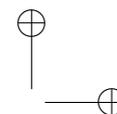


19 October – Dinner last night with Frank Warrin, at del Pazzo’s super-excellent restaurant. A curious thing about first-class Italian food is that you eat so little, yet enjoy it so much, and feel so thoroughly well fed. Frank said that if he were the Italian chief of staff, he would issue a ration of Provolone cheese before a decisive battle, and send every man into action smoking a Toscana cheroot. Those articles are made for real he-men – no doubt of that – and if you can stand up under them they surely “hearten ye,” as the South County people say.

22 October – Over on First Avenue the other day, I looked at the big curb-market that runs for a couple of blocks below Fourth St. I noticed that the pushcarts carried a much better line of vegetables than I have seen in other parts of town. The district is settled by Polish and Ukrainian Jews, apparently, and I think the evidence is that the housekeepers who patronize that market are good close buyers, and also that they know good vegetables when they see them. If I were keeping house I would trade there, even if I had to go some way to do it.

23 October – Election posters and ridiculous campaign documents are everywhere. I have looked at some of them; they are productions of the lowest order. What a strange quirk the human mind takes in these matters! Candidates whom everyone knows to be disreputable self-seeking fellows, probably scoundrels, are elected, and their doings are instantly invested with a purely factitious respectability. Herbert Spencer speaks of this. During the campaign, he says, “they are, by one or other party,

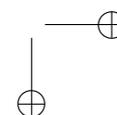
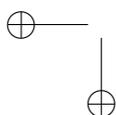


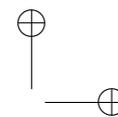
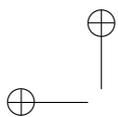


jeered at, lampooned, heckled, and in all ways treated with utter disrespect. But as soon as they assemble at Westminster, those against whom taunts and invectives, charges of incompetence and folly, had been showered from press and platform, excite unlimited faith.” Spencer cites the amusing parallel of a child, who was able to look with composure at a horrible cadaverous mask as long as it was held in the hand, but ran away shrieking when his father put it on.

24 October – Second-hand dealers say that Montague Glass’s earlier books and Mr. Dooley’s works are beginning to be much sought after; also that Alfred Henry Lewis’s Wolfville series is quite hard to get. It is a pity that Glass was led to overwork his vein. The earlier Potash and Perlmutter stories were a real character-creation and are entitled to a permanent place in our literature, with here and there another out of Glass’s subsequent output, like the one called *Object: Matrimony*. In fact, Glass’s characters and Mr. Dooley seem to me the only achievements in that line that are likely to stand the test of time, out of all the unconscionable ruck that the press continually shoots on us. From what little of the current output that I read, I would say that character-drawing is an utterly forgotten art.

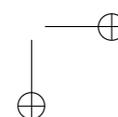
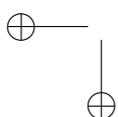
25 October – Roosevelt has been soft-soaping the bankers – a sure sign that the election is coming on. They seem to have promised to “go along,” which may be good policy, but looks unmanly and discreditable. They are pretending to acquiesce in something that they dislike and must certainly disbelieve in, and I have no notion whatever

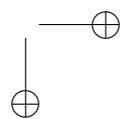
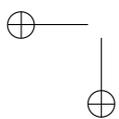
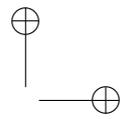
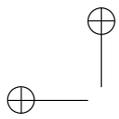


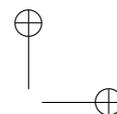


that they mean to keep to what they say. One can not care much what happens to people like that. They are merely a conspicuous fruit of the progressive reciprocal corruption that has gone on between the government and the people for a century and a half; they merely stand out in a whole population that has been as well and thoroughly corrupted as they are.

26 October – An invitation yesterday to lecture on some memorial foundation at Bryn Mawr. I have half a notion to go, and talk about the administration of Eubulus, who seems to have been exactly another Roosevelt, a most extraordinary resemblance. It might be a chance to show that there is some highly practical value in the study of Greek letters.



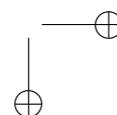
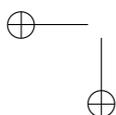


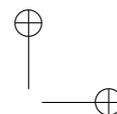
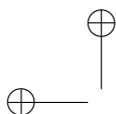


1934 November

1 November – All Saints' Day, the only one in the Church calendar that carries much weight with me, for I have known saints in my time, whereas I have to take the merits of the canonized at second-hand; it makes a difference. The day always reminds me anew of the loss that Protestantism has visited on Bible-readers by excluding the Apocrypha from our common text. The lessons for All Saints' Day, taken from the book of Wisdom, are exquisitely beautiful, and in general the Apocrypha is perfectly comparable with the canonical books for all a reader's purposes.

4 November – At Philadelphia, R. took me around to see the process by which the illustrations in my last book were reproduced. It filled me with amazement at its delicacy and intricacy. How extraordinary it is that the human mind can conceive and operate such a technique, and yet can not manage a workable technique of social life! It makes me think of Henry George's comment on the mind that was able to conceive and build the Brooklyn

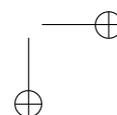
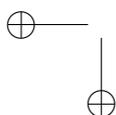


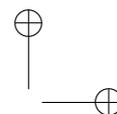


Bridge, but was unable to keep a lot of condemned wire from going into it.

5 November – Driving out behind Philadelphia, I saw many old houses and bits of scenery such as one associates with New England. Presently I saw a church like a small cathedral standing out on what looked to be sheer countryside, and I wondered where it got trade enough to go on with. It turned out to be the general headquarters of the Swedenborgians. Everything about it was made on the spot, mediaeval-style, and the result is interesting and creditable. The Swedenborgians have a school and a college there, and a training school for ministers. They do no proselytizing, but depend on a natural increase of their numbers; so one of their officials told me. He said the Romanists were wrong in setting the age from one to seven as the right period for inculcation; give them a free hand with children from seven to fourteen, and they would never apostatize. One would think something must depend on the general disposition and abilities of the child, but it appears not. Matthew Arnold speaks of Faraday as “a great natural philosopher with one side of his being, and a Sandemanian with the other,” and something like this seems to be the rule.

6 November – Several interesting persons, friends of R., yesterday and last night, one in particular who studied philosophy at Halle, went into law, and afterwards had something to do with banking, but has retained all the good of his early discipline. He spoke most lucidly of the bad influence of the idealist philosophers in applying Kant’s transcendentalism to the phenomenon of the



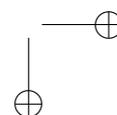
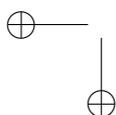


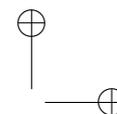
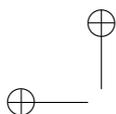
State; one seldom hears discourse like that nowadays, and I felt great respect for him, as for one who really knew what he was talking about. I was also much impressed with a handsome young Jewish woman who had a power of attraction that I have rarely seen exceeded, though I think it would be felt only by a man of intellectual type and attainments. Tourgueniev's Clara Militch might have been some such woman in the making.

7 November – At dinner with the C.'s in Baltimore, Drs. S. and D. present; S. a French Swiss, and D. a Belgian from Brussels. Mrs. S. made up a dinner expressly out of the French dishes that I turned up my nose at in my last book, *rillettes*, string beans, *fouaces*, etc., by way of a joke. A charming evening; I spoke English and listened in French, as I always do when I can, as I speak French with an execrable intonation, painful to hear; one would suppose I had never heard the language spoken. Miss C. came in late, when we were almost about leaving, and devoted herself to me in a most engaging way. A very few like her would cure me of my repugnance to youngsters; I wish I might see her again.

8 November – Emerson's rule of never reading a book less than a year old is one of the most valuable in the world.; E. F. Benson's *As We Are*, published two years ago, gives the best impression of the war's effect on civilization that I can imagine any book producing. It quite obliterates all its competitors in that field.

10 November – The results of the election seem to be accepted as matter-of-course; Roosevelt's subsidized mass

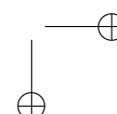
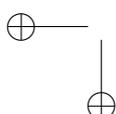


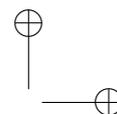
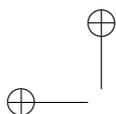


of voting power stayed bought, and that is that. I am not especially indignant at the spectacle of Two-Job Jim Farley buying votes at wholesale, but I am indignant at the sight of people who appear to think it is quite the thing to be done. Henry Mencken told me in Baltimore that what he lamented was the disappearance of the distinctively American virtues and integrities which he said humorously “were invented by Benjamin Franklin,” but which were great and real, even if perhaps a little narrow. The tacit approval of Farley’s huxtering is an index of this, and one feels utterly degraded by the thought that such people are one’s fellow-citizens.

11 November – In Philadelphia the other day I read W. H. Chamberlin’s new book on Russia, or enough of it to get the taste of its quality, which is excellent. I was not enough interested in the subject to go far with it. He says that Lenin’s expectation that as the economic organization developed, the State would “wither away,” is not being fulfilled; in fact, State power is increasing at the expense of social power, quite as elsewhere. Lenin’s idea seems to have been affected by the curious superstition that the State’s interests are identical with society’s, or at least that they can be made so, which is impossible, as the two sets of interests are in exact and irreconcilable opposition.

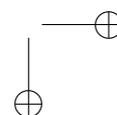
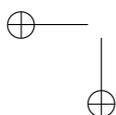
12 November – A physician told me today that Spanish doctors cured measles by taking an ounce of blood out of the patient’s left arm, and injecting it into the right. Now, how can that be, and how was it discovered? The practice is traditional, its origin is lost in the mystery

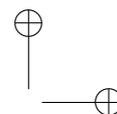
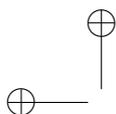




of ages, and no one in Spain or anywhere else has the slightest idea how the process works, but only knows that it does work. Somebody might get up a pretty good little book on the “miracles of discovery,” for many discoveries seem to have been little short of miraculous; medicine is full of them. How was it found out that crabs were edible if prepared in a certain way, and otherwise not? Who followed the cassava’s curious vacillations between food and poison? I would read a book on the miracles of discovery with great interest, and I believe it would be popular.

13 November – I have read Edith Wharton’s autobiography called *A Glance Backward*, knowing that if any autobiography were in impeccably good taste, hers would be, and so I would be put considerably on the way to an opinion whether any autobiography can be in good taste. I now doubt it thoroughly, having always wondered idly why they are ever written. They seem to assume as legitimate an interest which to save my life I can not regard as legitimate; and this at once raises the question of taste. I notice, too, that the literatures of more objective peoples do not run to autobiography as heavily as ours. French has very few, so has Italian; and I do not know one in Flemish or Dutch. Memoirs, diaries and pensées are another matter; they can be as personal as the sequence of subjects requires, and such interest as they arouse is legitimate. But the mere idea or project of an autobiography, properly so called, seems a flatulent sort of thing, committing one to a continual compromise with impropriety. Popular taste, however, being what it is in such matters, one can understand the motive behind

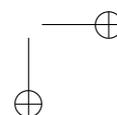
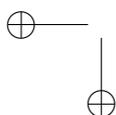


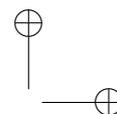
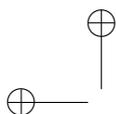


most of the current attempts at autobiography. When dining with Calmucks, one belches by way of compliment to one's host and his cuisine.

16 November – There is a grain of reason underlying the silly exaggerations of hero-worship. Contact with a great master of any art gives one a lively sense of the height to which ability, perseverance and industry have been carried in the service of the best of our ideals and aspirations, and this produces a peculiarly encouraging and strengthening exhilaration. I felt this today when I saw Rollin Kirby and Webster sitting together in the Club Anonyme – Kirby, by far our greatest master of the political cartoon, and Webster, of the social cartoon. It must have been a most elevating experience to see a meeting between Tolstoy and Tourgueniev, such as Tolstoy speaks of. I have never forgotten the wholesome effect produced on me when as a mere youngster I saw some sixteen or eighteen of the world's greatest musicians together at dinner; among them were Mancinelli, the de Reszkes, Anton Seidl, Mahler, Tschaikowsky, Felix Mottl and Emil Paur. I asked Webster today how he came by his intimate knowledge of a small boy's mentality; he said it came from his upbringing in a one-horse mid-Western town. In my judgment, his insight in this direction is one of the most remarkable things I ever saw.

18 November – People ought to get some inkling of the State's true nature from observing that the only political editorials worth reading are invariably those of Opposition papers, no matter which party is in power. I have remarked this phenomenon for years, and there

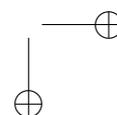
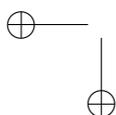


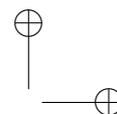
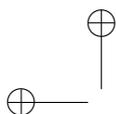


is a most conspicuous example of it now in the *Herald Tribune*. That paper has a good editorial page; it is the only one in New York that has, as far as I know. Yet when Mr. Hoover was in power, its editorial page was as weak and disingenuous as any page could be. Let the Republican party win in 1936, and I will wager any amount that in two weeks' time the *Herald's* page will be once more sheer bilgewater.

19 November – I hear that Senator Borah is out to expose the colossal waste and debauchery of the New Deal's spending spree. I don't think he can cite anything beyond what any intelligent person already knows. Nor do I think he can arouse any public interest, still less indignation. We simply have no public capable of either; it is too thoroughly corrupted, just as Mr. Jefferson prophesied as the "necessary consequence" of governmental centralization. The corruption of moral integrity is fatal, but the corruption of intellectual integrity – about which very little is said – is equally so; and a combination of the two to such degree as now exists among us, does not show an inviting prospect.

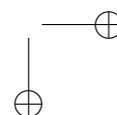
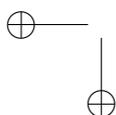
22 November – The press reports that Hitler's regime is shaky; that there is a falling-out between the *Reichswehr* and the *Schutzstaffel*. According to history, the next thing in order would be a military despotism; it will be interesting to see whether things turn out that way. Six months ago I thought Hitler would last about a year, and I still think he may hold out through the winter. I also think the only change that would help the German people at all is to restore the monarchy.

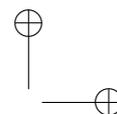
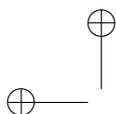




23 November – A letter from a correspondent in New Orleans has brought up in my mind again the old question whether we are right in assuming that all who answer to the zoölogical term *homo sapiens* are human beings. Are we right in assuming that zoölogy and psychology go together? My correspondent mentions the findings of some scientificker which tend to show that the “missing link” is not missing, but is around us all the time in vastly preponderating numbers. This would make the human being, psychologically, an occasional evolutionary product at present, brought about by processes as yet undetermined perhaps indeterminable. The evidence of history and ordinary observation would seem to point that way. If so, it would be a black eye for Rousseau, and the ruin of collectivism, republicanism, and every social theory based on the notion that *homo sapiens* is perfectible or even significantly improvable. At the same time, it would be an amazing leg up for John Calvin. How odd it would be if some day the anthropologists brought John Calvin back!

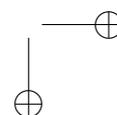
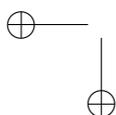
25 November – Silly talk about whether the New Deal is here to stay. Of course it is here to stay; the only real competition of political parties will be for the privilege and emoluments of administering it. Probably there will be superficial changes, but none essential; none, that is, which will at all redistribute actual power between the State and society. One may safely bet on that. But people are always content with the superficial view; witness, for example, the talk about Fascism, Naziism, Stalinism, as though they were not three aspects of the same thing, and as though Rooseveltism were not a fourth aspect of

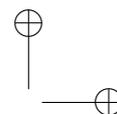
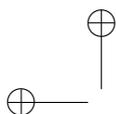




it. The fundamental thing is the State. Similarly, the fundamental thing underlying Methodism, Presbyterianism, Congregationalism, is organized Christianity. State aggrandizement here is precisely what it is anywhere. Moreover, the United States is existing under a regime of personal government precisely as Italy, Russia and Germany are; not exercised in the same ways, but only because the State's interests do not require it to be exercised in those ways. If and when they do, it will be. The point is that, however it be exercised, personal government is always personal government. I understand that in Portugal it is exercised with considerable moderation, but its essential character is the same.

27 November – Back from speech-making at Bryn Mawr, and a charming visit with my old friends there. The college gave me as good an audience as I ever had. I have looked into Hilton's novel, *Lost Horizon*, which is being bought at such a rate. I can understand the attraction it might have for many people; it expresses the larvated or inarticulate wish for a better order of life on earth. More novelists ought to get a sense of this wish, and express it positively as this one does, instead of negatively by dwelling on the disorders and maladjustments that make this wish so poignant. They might accomplish something. Curiously, only the other day I was talking with a mediaevalist of sorts, who said that what the world needs most is a lot of monasteries, run on the mediaeval plan, uncontrolled by the State. There is no doubt that the studies of Montalembert and De Maistre make out the mediaeval monastic life as something not half bad; on the contrary, a much more

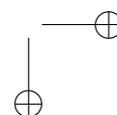
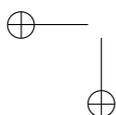


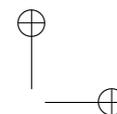
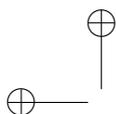


interesting existence for a civilized person than any that one can attain to now, unless one sets up for a sort of eremite and “goes it alone” – as one is pretty well forced to do in American society if one hopes to get on without utter dishevelment.

29 November – Thanksgiving Day, and the most dreadful weather one could imagine; the humidity is at 97, and it is all one can do to get one’s breath. I remember Alfred Henry Lewis’s story of Thanksgiving Day in Wolfville, when Old Man Enright announced to the camp that the Great Father in Washington had set the day, “putting it in his message on the broad ground that everybody’s lucky who escapes death.” That seems about as well as Mr. Roosevelt could do under the general circumstances, and with the weather what it is, I could not be sure he would be right, at that.

30 November – I heard a capital story last evening, about a scientificker who is a great authority on Argentine ants; I did not happen to hear his name. He seems to be an unpretentious man, with a good deal of quiet humour. The city of Los Angeles wrote him that they had a plague of these ants, that the town was being eaten up; what could be done about it? Telling the story on himself, he said, “I have learned a great deal about the Argentine ant, and I have great respect for him, while I have no respect at all for Los Angeles; and so,” he added, demurely, “I did not give them my best advice.”

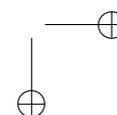
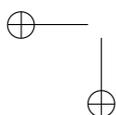


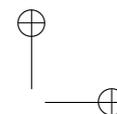
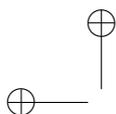


1934 December

3 December – Conversation with a college trustee. He remarked the decline in the personnel of the Christian ministry, and the parallel decline in the personnel of teaching staffs, in the last half-century. The professor of his day thought of nothing but what he was doing; now he was preoccupied with getting promotion, getting more salary, lobbying for a profitable change of job, etc. I was taught by some very able men, and as I remember, not one of them ever showed a trace of any such ambition. I can remember, too, that in my boyhood the Christian pulpit in New York was filled by men of extraordinary devotion and power; this was especially true of the Episcopal Church. Certainly their successors are no such men. I imagine that a like deterioration has taken place in academic staffs.

5 December – This morning Percy Mackaye mentioned some cases of extraordinary longevity that he ran across among the Southern mountaineers. One man gave his age as 132 years; Mackaye verified it as far as 118 years, and

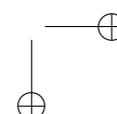
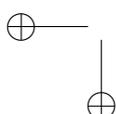


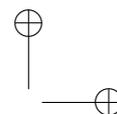
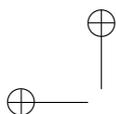


took his word for the rest. This man had one son aged 90, and another aged seven, both living. Longevity seemed to be general in the region; several men reported themselves as over a hundred years old, and the neighbourhood seemed to think nothing strange of it. All this appears fantastic. I believe longevity is regarded as a hereditary trait; I wonder whether regional influences have anything to do with it.

6 December – Great talk of “liberalizing” the Republican party. Borah and young Theodore Roosevelt are all for it. This means simply that the New Deal is here to stay, as a permanent resource of waste and theft, and that the Republican party is by way of reorganizing to compete for the management of it. In other words, it means that the Republican politicians smell money, and want to garner it in.

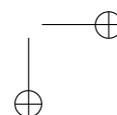
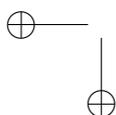
7 December – Dr. Bell is going down to Haiti for a few days, and wants me to go with him, which I could hardly do, as it would be too long an interruption of my work. My only justification would be that the change might cure a wretched bronchial cough. Nevertheless, the idea rather interests me, for I believe the Haitians possess an unusual lot of proverbial expressions that might be worth getting at, if one could; probably some one down there has collected them. Haiti is nominally a French-speaking country, but their French would almost certainly be a dialect that no other French-speaking person could recognize, so I don't know how far one could get with it. I have put in a sort of apprenticeship on the Walloon tongue, but I presume that would be no great help.

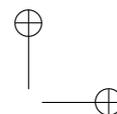
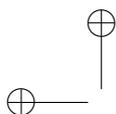




8 December – I have dipped into the biography of the Russian dancer Nijinsky, written by his wife. I have not made a serious business of it. The man is presented as an uncommonly sweet and noble character, not praised as such from a wife’s point of view, but with plenty of evidence to show him as such. The book has the great fault of modern biography, which put me off it at once; but for that, I would have read it carefully with pleasure. It gives so much space to immaterial matter, pointless for any kind of reader, and for a decent reader, repulsive. The woman makes one feel like a voyeur, a Peeping Tom. I refer not only to the offensive particularities of Nijinsky, personal relations with Diaghileff, and the casual allusions of like import that appear here and there, but to such things as the woman’s long account of her persistent courtship of Nijinsky. Such matters are no concern of the public; they are exploited, I firmly believe, for no other purpose than of pandering to a low and disgusting curiosity. I am convinced that the old biographer’s rule of telling the public impartially all that is the public’s legitimate business to know, and nothing else, is a good one; though not from the modern publisher’s point of view, since “the revolt of the masses” and a wide dissemination of an ignorant and fruitless literacy have opened a large market for what is beyond doubt a mere larvated pornography.

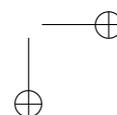
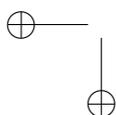
9 December – Allen McCurdy died last week, John Daly Murphy the week before, and yesterday Edmund Evans. He died young, only fifty-six. I did not expect it. I stopped overnight with him in Bryn Mawr two weeks ago, and while not robust, he seemed to be making good

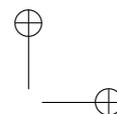
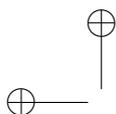




progress from his late illness. All these men were real *individuals*, and can never be replaced; and individuals seem just now to be the scarcest commodity in existence. I was remarking this to Tommy the other day, when we were speaking of McCurdy, and he said he believed that people were no longer born in the old-fashioned way, but were stamped out with cookie-cutters from a very inferior half-bakable dough. From what one sees, one might indeed suspect something of the kind.

10 December – The Danube States are simmering again, due to the assassination of King Alexander, and a lot of poor people are being shovelled out of Yugoslavia into Hungary, apparently with the customary cruelties and indecencies applicable in such circumstances. Bro. Benes talks big yesterday, I see, but I still doubt that it will come to blows. I don't believe any government can trust its people to stay quiet in the army's absence, things being as they are. What the peoples chiefly want to do is to eat right, which they have not done for some time, and I think a war would give rise to more sporadic civil disturbances than it is worth. It is a guess, of course, but I do not expect a European war until things look up considerably, which they will not do as long as production is kept down by the exactions of the State. The countries are about at the point reached by the Roman Empire at the end of the second century, when it cost so much to support the State that there was not enough production to pay the bills. All the men under arms, for example, have to be supported out of production, and I hear they number about six millions. That in itself is a big item in the deadweight.

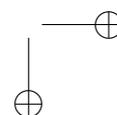
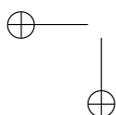


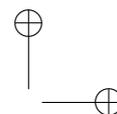
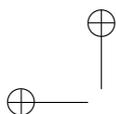


11 December – Brilliant sun, with an extremely high, sharp light. The ocean at Narragansett smoother than I have ever seen it. I noticed the phenomenon called *looming*; a large tanker broadside to the horizon seemed to be twenty feet above the water line, and Block Island seemed to stand at that height. I have often seen that curious sight, but never so clearly, nor ever when objects had so high an apparent elevation.

12 December – A Mexican sheep-dog here, most intelligent and amiable, with a charming, affectionate disposition. Also a jet-black bullet-headed cat weighing twelve pounds; the handsomest cat I ever saw, even in Brussels. The two are good friends, though the cat rather lords it over the dog. A strange thing to me is that both these animals are extravagantly fond of sauerkraut; the smell of it sets them to carrying on at a great rate. I never heard of anything like this before. I used to own a cat that would beg for pancakes, and make a meal of them, and one of her kittens inherited this taste; but I never knew of another cat that would eat them.

13 December – I hear today that Nijinsky's sister is indignant about the biography that his wife published – as well she may be – and proposes to write a volume in rebuttal, which is deplorably bad taste, as deplorable as Ellen Terry's son showed in writing reminiscences of his mother as an offset to Shaw's publication of her letters. Poor Nijinsky! – this seems to be the culmination of his misfortunes, to have two wretched women start a cat-fight in public over him. One of Nijinsky's associates, the dancer Karsavina, brought out an excellent book called



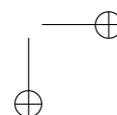
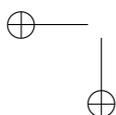


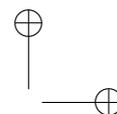
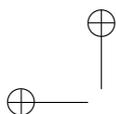
Theatre Street a few years ago. In most respects it is quite what an autobiographical narrative should be; it is written in very good taste. I thought Diaghileff was dead, but I was told today that he is alive. If Mme. Nijinsky's book is published in England, I think Diaghileff could bring it under the English libel law.

14 December – Speaking today of Mme. G. with some one who knows her well, who said as she grew older she was becoming more and more the peasant. I have sometimes thought that advancing age tends to bring about a reversion to one's original pattern. In one's middle years the pattern may be pretty well covered up by acquired traits, tastes, habits, accomplishments, manners, but I think that towards the end it is likely to show through.

15 December – A curious friendship. Two women who live by a fresh-water pond back in the country noticed that every evening this summer, at very nearly the same hour, a deer came down to the pond for a drink, passing close to the house. They have a fine cat, Persian, I believe, or semi-Persian; and this cat went out and hobnobbed with the deer, and the two struck up a friendship almost at once. The result is that ever since, the cat goes out at the regular time and waits for the deer to come along. I must ask how the situation stands, now that the pond is frozen over, as it has been for a day or two since my informant got this story.

16 December – Looking through Priestley's *English Journey* with no great interest; to do the book justice, I

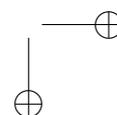
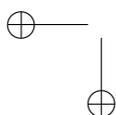


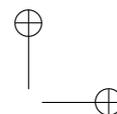
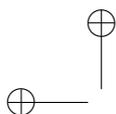


suppose I should have had more. It is mostly a sociological survey, and probably as a dutiful member of society, one ought to be docile under those visitations. I found it dull, however, and presently turned away to examine Roosevelt's excellent political move in springing his hoodwinking scheme for "taking the profit out of war." That is a sure-fire subject for the limelight of publicity. It will start every fountain of verbosity to spouting like an oil gusher, and thus switch the public mind away from the Administration's misfeasances and follies. The sharp fellow put Johnson, the most accomplished bull-roarer in the country, on his humbugging investigation commission, so he can count on the job of diverting public attention being thoroughly done. Johnson's bellowings ought even to enable inflation to be put over unnoticed, or anything else, considering that two years ago they were loud enough to drown the sound of a complete *coup d'état*.

17 December – Arthur Goodrich was saying the other day that the best theatre-town, music-town, general-amusement-town in the United States, is Washington. From the box-office point of view it has displaced New York. Ever since he spoke of it I have been noticing indications that he is right. The thing simply means that the only people who have any money that they feel they can count on are the State's jobholders. The payroll in the city of Washington comes to more than three million dollars a month.

18 December – I read Karsavina's *Theatre Street* over again, mostly to get the taste of Nijinskaia's book out

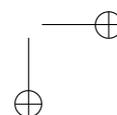
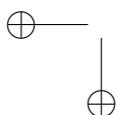


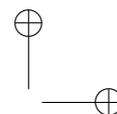
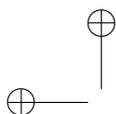


of my mouth. The contrast increased my admiration for its good taste. Barrie's introduction, however, says that Karsavina wrote the book in English, implying that she wrote it as it now stands, which is simply impossible for any but an English-speaking person to have done. A foreigner can learn to write first-class, hundred-proof idiomatic English, but never that kind of English – the kind that appears in Karsavina's book. Conrad could not; Carl Schurz could not; Jusserand could not; and if they could not, it is hardly worth any one's while to try. I see that my vague recollection about Diaghileff was right, after all; Karsavina mentions his death.

20 December – An odd sight here this morning beside the little Rum Pond, a hundred yards away. A brown-breasted eagle, a superb blue heron, and a big black cat, all three regarding one another in an interested way, apparently amicable. The heron is either a resident at the pond or a regular visitor; I have often seen him. The cat belongs on the place; he is a type I never saw anywhere but in Brussels – cob-build, bullet-head, short ears, heavy jowls, thick coat. He seems also to have the Belgian cat's disposition and natural good breeding. I have wondered how he happens to be here, for his place is certainly in some high-life shop window in Brussels, asleep, with passers-by pausing to admire him. The Bruxellois take their human sovereigns as pretty much a matter of course; the cat dynasty gets the real *jure divino* article of popular homage.

24 December – Death has cut what the Scots would call a “monstrous cantle” out of my American acquaintance this

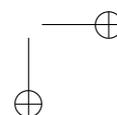
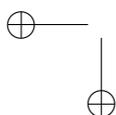


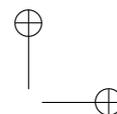
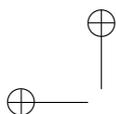


year, leaving me with scarcely any one that one could call a friend. Dick Mansfield, Allen McCurdy, Brand Whitlock, and now Edmund Evans – they are in my mind as Christmas comes on. Henriette sent me a greeting for the season; I have not seen or heard from her since she was married, now half a year or more ago, but marriage is a preoccupying business, especially to one of her temperament. If she is happy in it, she is probably more beautiful and interesting than ever. Cassandre wrote me charmingly of her plans for the holiday's festivities; how unnaturally far-off they seem! Eugene Saxton sent me an exquisite poem of Angelus Silesius in a translation as exquisite as the original. How right Matthew Arnold was in saying that the great moving force in religion is its unconscious poetry, and how wrong organized Christianity has always been in pretending to find it in something else!

26 December – The interest-rate has come down. The banks say it is to bring capital out and encourage it to invest in productive enterprise, but that is all humbug. The truth is that the banks can't lend the money they have, and don't want any more. Nobody will borrow money at any price these two years; the banks have hardly done business enough to let them stand off the sheriff. Nor are there signs that they will be likely to do much more in the near future.

27 December – I was dragooned into going to a movie-show with a repulsive catchpenny name, *One Night of Love*. I am glad I went; I wish I might see it again. It shows what can actually be done with the talking-picture

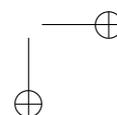
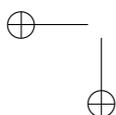


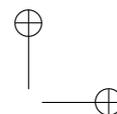
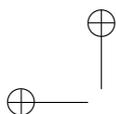


medium. I call it a work of great art. I was interested to see how painstakingly the most trifling details were worked out. In the scene at the Metropolitan Opera, for instance, I would take oath that the producers had hired the regular Metropolitan audience as well as the performers, it was so characteristic. Then the look on the regisseur's face as the play ended – the last thing one sees – says so plainly that while the girl's work may be good enough for the Metropolitan, it isn't good enough for him, and that he means to hold an inquest on it before the night is out. Those bits of good workmanship – and there are many – are very interesting. The only improvement I could suggest is to substitute some other opera for *Butterfly*. The setting is pretty, but the song is really not much to try the gal's mettle; any good city-church soprano could sing that music for all there is in it, and on only about half-steam, at that.

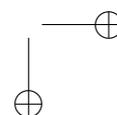
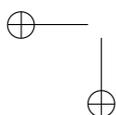
28 December – It is as painful to me to see a dog treated like a human being as to see a human being treated like a dog. I notice the number of people – sensible people, too – who keep dogs and are fond of them, and have no idea how to treat them; they pervert and ruin their dogs in the belief that they are being kind to them.

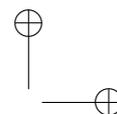
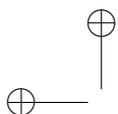
29 December – The rhododendron and laurel leaves are rather a sad sight in the winter. They contract and roll up on themselves against the cold, much as a man tries to do when he is ill-clad, or as he draws himself up in his sleep when his bed-covering is scanty.





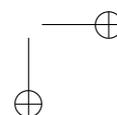
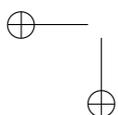
30 December – The Japanese government is denouncing the ill-fated and ill-famed naval treaty of 1921. That shows the fatuity of committing such matters to the management of an arrogant Baptist attorney. It is the cheapest and commonest allegation against German diplomacy that it does not understand the “national psychology” of other peoples, and hence shows no manners; but what are we to say anything like that? The Japanese Foreign Office is quite right in saying that the arrangement is a matter of constant humiliation to its people; it must be so. The Japanese and French delegations at the conference were figuratively given seats in the servants’ gallery, confronted with a cut-and-dried programme, and then told to sign on the dotted line. The Japanese are extremely proud, extremely nationalistic and extremely formal; it may be sinful and against God that they are, but they are, and they have no notion of being different. When a high State official does a hara-kiri because his mistake has kept the Emperor waiting twenty minutes on a public occasion, it ought to show the most ordinary provincial jack-leg lawyer that etiquette counts with the Japanese. It would not have cost a cent to say, “We should be glad if you would accept a 5 : 5 : 3 ratio. We put it forth as a suggestion, quite tentatively, as what looks to us like the fair thing all round, but we are perfectly open-minded about it. If it suits you, we shall be very much pleased, but if not, well, that is that, and we must try to skirmish up something that will.” By not taking the course of common politeness, we made the Japanese bide their time until international affairs got in such shape that they could tell us with impunity just what they think of us, and put the treaty in the stove;

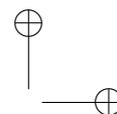
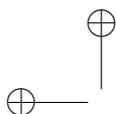




there is nothing we can do about it. I still think we shall be manoeuvred into a mess with them sooner or later, and it was supremely silly to furnish them the memory of an utterly gratuitous indelicacy.

31 December – I listened to some gramophone records of Bach, “arranged” by Stokowsky; good enough Stokowsky, probably, but mighty poor Bach. I detest these miserable collaborations – Bach-d’Albert, Bach-Liszt, etc. – having never heard one yet that I could listen to without aggravation and impatience. For me, Bach is plenty good enough “as is,” and if I have to hear him Bowdlerized or tinkered, I prefer not to hear him at all.



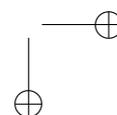
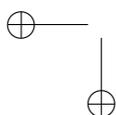


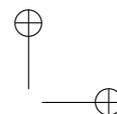
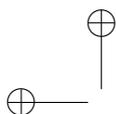
1935 January

1 January – A high surf at Narragansett, much broken. The strong, steady wind from the west blew a great mane of spindrift back from it. In profile, as I approached Scarborough beach from the north, the waves looked curiously like a herd of great white porcupines coming in.

3 January – I saw a large herd of cattle grazing with their heads in the same direction, as they always do. Why they do this is not clear to me. I have heard that it is due to the way the wind happens to be blowing, but the herd I saw today was getting the wind broadside on. True, the wind was light, but what there was of it was not behind them.

5 January – The new invention called wirephoto is very wonderful. It would be more interesting if it brought something that a reasonable being would care to look at. The sample I saw was a quite good reproduction of a lot of minor athletic events down South, and some women sunning themselves on a beach in Florida. Most



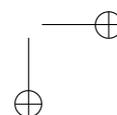
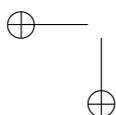


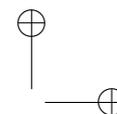
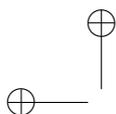
of these elaborate inventions, I should think, must make the inventors feel like Mr. Weller's charity-boy at the end of the alphabet, wondering whether it was worth while going through so much to get so little.

8 January – This matter of “sex-appeal” in people of the stage must be a little exaggerated. I wonder how much of what is so called is actually sex-appeal. The great male sopranos of Handel's time, Senesino and Farinelli, could have had no sex-appeal; at least, I do not see how they could, for they were castrati, and had no sex – they were neuters. Yet the women of London were as daft over them as ours are over the screen stars. The evidence of this is beyond doubt. I have just been reading Norman Flower's life of Handel, which documents it thoroughly.

9 January – The liquor-sellers are on a protracted spree of advertising. One resents the booming of alcohol as much as one did the booming of Prohibition. Why not give orangeade and grape juice a chance? There is a natural competition among food products that will bring about a just balance if let alone. One of the greatest evils of advertising is that it upsets this.

10 January – I have been looking at a book written by a man who put in a lifetime as head usher at the White House. It is a poor affair, and should never have been published. It shows clearly, however, the extremely commonplace quality of the people with whom it concerns itself; not only the Presidents and their families, but their whole entourage – what a set! Another thing it shows is that the Presidency is no such backbreaking job as it is

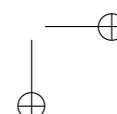
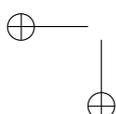


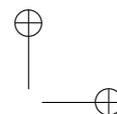
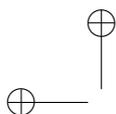


cracked up to be. The newspapers have made a myth of its labours, and have made it out of whole cloth, a piece of pure sycophancy.

11 January – In New York again, living largely by electric light in these dark foggy days, and reflecting on the amount of harm done by Edison’s infernal idle curiosity about a lot of things that were none of his business, and how miserably he complicated human life, under the ignorant notion that he was making it easier. Those three cronies, Edison, Ford, and Firestone, who used to hobnob together in Florida every year, would be regarded by a true civilization as public enemies far more dangerous than Capone and Dillinger. These latter were in a sense localized; they could not be in two places at once, while the other three are everywhere at once.

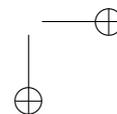
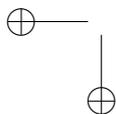
12 January – Speaking with Amos Pinchot about Allen McCurdy’s death, and the recent death of others that we knew, Amos said it was hard to lose them, “but think, on the other hand, of the crowd that will be down to meet us at the railway station when we come in.” Thinking it over, I don’t believe there is any one I would rather find waiting for me at the station than McCurdy. I don’t recall agreeing with him once in twenty years, about anything; and I have known abler men with broader minds and higher culture. But McCurdy’s uncompromising, dogged, North-of-Ireland Scotch Protestant character, his utter fearlessness and his consummate kindness, made him the sort of man that one would be pretty glad to see. If it turns out that psychical life does survive physical life, it will show that our present state of ignorance is evidence

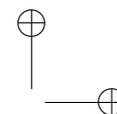
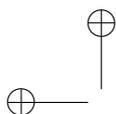




that the universe is run on a wise plan. Our “intimations of immortality” are just enough to keep us interested, and not enough to interfere with our making the most of ourselves where we are. I was put in mind of this by the very few words that Socrates threw out at the end of the Apology, about the fine time he would have out of talking things over with a lot of his spiritual forebears, if it were true that he could ever get at them. If I knew to a certainty that I might have an hour’s talk with Plato, Sophocles, Marcus Aurelius, Cervantes, Rabelais, I would not be much interested in anything this side of that prospect. If we all had such absolute knowledge, our present life would go to the dogs; I don’t see how or why we would have any social organization at all worth speaking of. Also, if we had absolute knowledge that we shall stay dead when we die, it would radically affect the way we spend what life we have.

13 January – I do not see how the Supreme Court can possibly write an opinion supporting the Administration in the face of the questions asked by some of the judges, regarding the sanctity of contract. I think they will do it, but if so they have shown themselves dishonest in advance. I look for a five-to-four decision; the case of the Minnesota moratorium gives no hope of anything better. It may be, as the Administration’s counsel says, that an adverse decision would throw the railways into bankruptcy, but what of it? – they are bankrupt anyway. It might throw the country into bankruptcy, but again the country is bankrupt. It would open the way for every malevolent politician to come forward with some nostrum for saving the world, but then they would be

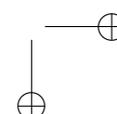
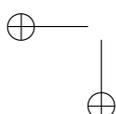


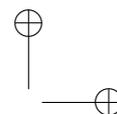
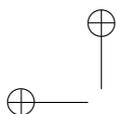


coming forward on their own, and their rascalities would stand in the clear. We are in for a frightfully sorry time in any case, so why not have it at once? These fraudulent solvencies that the Administration is trying to bring out of an empty hat are far worse than an honest bankruptcy all round, and will cost a lot more in the long run. We could learn from the Romans in these matters. The tribune Pomponius declared that although he had given his word to young Manlius under duress, it was nevertheless a contract, and must be kept. Manlius had invaded the tribune's house, early in the morning, and threatened Pomponius with instant death if he did not promise to quash some proceedings against Manlius's father before the day was over. Pomponius might have refused, and taken the consequences, but he promised, and having promised, the Roman doctrine of contract required him to make good his word, which he did. A decision like that from the Supreme Court would put some heart in many people, for it would show that there was still a little vestige of integrity somewhere in our public life.

14 January – Hitler is taking the wind out of Mussolini's sails, or in more vulgar phrase, "crabbing his game." One remembers how Mussolini made a demonstration against Switzerland for home consumption. Since Hitler got into the business, a little thing like that would not be worth a stickful on the eighth page.

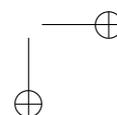
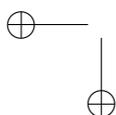
16 January – Huey Long is the first; there will be a second, and a third, a fourth, and so on. One wonders whether certain Girondists forecast a like succession after

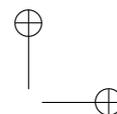
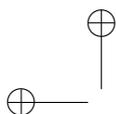




1789, or whether the Administration ever heard of a girl named Pandora, or ever read the *Arabian Nights*. If what I hear is true, there is nothing more exhibitory than this Townsend plan of giving everybody over sixty years old an income of \$200 a month. I am told that it has twenty million signatures, and that Washington is thoroughly worried over it. For my part, I only wonder that it has not a hundred and twenty million signatures. When a nostrum like that can get the franchise of twenty million persons, I submit that it shows plainly what sort of civilization ours is, and what our nostrum of free public education amounts to.

18 January – Fundamental economics are very simple; the humblest of us understand and practice them all the time, though we are like Molière’s hero when we do it. The trouble is that convenience introduces complications. Money is a complication; other evidences of debt, such as checks, drafts, notes, bills of exchange, are complications introduced for convenience. Then some person with a predatory sagacity sees a way to exploit the complications, and does so; then another and another; indefinitely. When the process of exploitation has gone far enough, there are collisions of predatory interest, and finally a great general dislocation. When this takes place, if people had their minds on fundamentals, they would see that the only thing to do is to recede. But their minds are set on the complications, and all they can think of is driving ahead and devising a new and more intricate lot of complications to pile atop of those that have done the mischief. All this means an increase of power and prestige for the State, and a corresponding degeneration

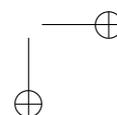
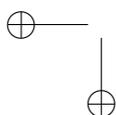


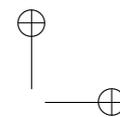
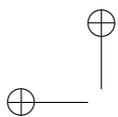


of society. It is interesting to see that all the instruction in economics and politics that our institutions supply has to do with complications; none of it with fundamentals. I have examined a great many textbooks, and find it invariably so. When the distinction is clearly drawn and continually kept in mind, both studies are simple and easy. As we have always taught them, they are so confusing and obscure that no one can make any sense out of them.

21 January – Reading Edith Wharton’s *Valley of Decision*; the first half of it dreadfully tedious, the second half less so. The trouble is, she had nowhere near story enough – or rather, does not tell story enough – to carry all that prose, and the fact that it is good prose does not make up for the lack. I imagine it must be an early work, from her diligence in shovelling in every scrap of the special knowledge she acquired in preparation for it. Some one should have told her about the bishop’s advice to a young curate, “Don’t try to tell all you know in one sermon.” A man who managed this matter remarkably well is Feuchtwanger, in *Jud Süß*; I admire the structural work of that book very much, and like to go back to it every once in a while, and look at it again.

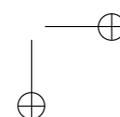
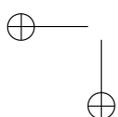
23 January – In the country once more, for another spell of work at my little book on the State. It would go much easier in spite of frequent interruptions, if I were not oppressed with a great sense of futility in publishing it. Any good critic would say that the main object of the book is to show that there was no use in writing it. However, I suppose it is worth while to leave a sound

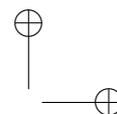
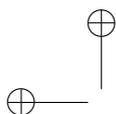




view of the State on record, and that is all I hope to do. This will be the last word I shall ever write on public affairs, and I shall be glad indeed when it is done.

25 January – The blizzard has piled the roads with snow, and pretty well stopped traffic north of here, particularly in the towns. Boston and Providence are reported at a standstill. I saw two flocks of quail on the Great Swamp Road today, and quail tracks on the doorsill of this house. People here feed the birds, so the more adventurous among them do not take the trouble to go south. I have seen bluebirds and jays, and I was told that there are robins about, but I have not seen any.

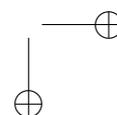
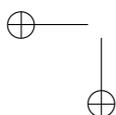


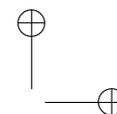
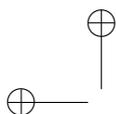


1935 August

Antwerp, 10 August – In my opinion, Mussolini's threats against Ethiopia are a bluff. Two things make me think so. First, if there were anything worth stealing in Ethiopia, England would long ago have stolen it. Second, the Italian State is now absorbing fifty per cent of the national income, and when that point is reached, production is slowed down far enough to bring about serious dissatisfaction. So I am inclined to suspect that Mussolini is anticipating trouble, and is therefore creating a diversion, and also putting as many men as possible under military rule, by calling them to the colours. It is an expedient that peters out sooner or later, but the modern politician is a Micawber, always hanging on as best he can at the moment, and hoping that something will turn up to clear him in the future.

11 August – A Dutch acquaintance tells me he was brought up to believe that the Low Countries have the worst climate in the world, and he always believed it. Lately, however, he spent three years in travel, and

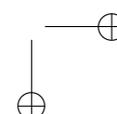
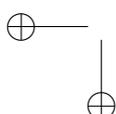


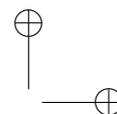
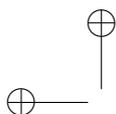


came back convinced that they have a very good climate. There may be something in this. Certainly the test of a climate is the degree of health you have, and for my own part, having sampled a good many climates, I know I am never so well and vigorous as here in Belgium. I think the remarkable drying property of the air may have something to do with it. The face-cloth that I hung up this morning was dry as a bone at noon, in a day of good hard rain. I do not believe a housekeeper in Belgium knows what mildew is. I have long been meaning to see whether there is a Flemish word for it, but I keep forgetting to do so.

12 August – The city has got up a splendid exhibition of paintings loaned from private collections in Antwerp. One is astonished by their number and quality, and one comes away with the notion that there must be a tidy lot of money here. The strangers passing through Antwerp are in luck this summer, for this is their only chance to see these paintings.

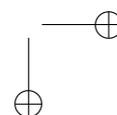
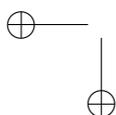
13 August – Cassandre says today that the main charm of these regions is the evidence they present that somewhere at some time somebody was making some kind of effort after a civilized existence. This is extremely well put, especially to an American, for he sees no such evidence at home. An opulent existence, yes; but a civilized existence, no. It is a rather sad thought, too, when one has lived long enough to see in perspective the chance that New York, for instance, had as late even as thirty years ago to make something of itself; or Boston, or Philadelphia.

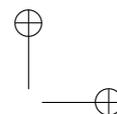
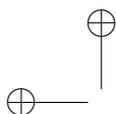




14 August – The fall of the dollar has caused numbers of Germans to go over on a quick *Rundreise* in the United States at a very cheap rate. One steamship line here is doing a great business of that kind. I have been watching a party of a hundred or more, just back from a five-weeks trip, four weeks (nearly) on the ocean, and six days on land. Most of them stayed in New York, but some got a glimpse of Boston, and some went overnight to Niagara Falls. They were plain people, well-behaved, and uninteresting. They seemed to know some English, as a rule, and I noticed how they made use of it as a kind of lingua franca among themselves. They would sift English phrases and idioms into their colloquial German, exactly as Mark Twain did in his Fourth of July oration at Berlin; their speech was macaronic. I have observed the same thing often among the “Americanized” Italians, down Bleeker St. way. One wonders what the effect of this will be upon the languages. Perhaps the literary use of language will disappear, leaving only the use of it as a means of getting oneself measurably understood. In our country, indeed, this is about what the English language has already come to.

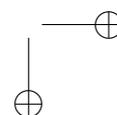
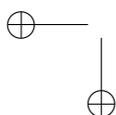
15 August – The volume of so-called popular literature grows noticeably, month by month. Thirty years ago, I remember, there was almost none in circulation, but now the newsstands and book stalls carry an incredible amount of cheap and vulgar print, quite up to the mark, I should say, of the garbage dumped daily from our presses. All this is evidence of the effort after a general and indiscriminate literacy, which observation has caused me most thoroughly to disbelieve in. It puts

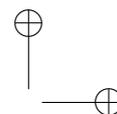
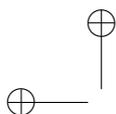




an instrument into the hands of people who are quite unable to use it, but who assume that they are able to use it, and the result is bad. The truth is that literacy is valuable only as intelligence keeps pace with it; in itself, literacy is no mark or evidence of intelligence, nor is it any sign whatever of an inclination to any purposes that intelligence would suggest. This truth is what the advocates of general literacy, from Mr. Jefferson down, have all overlooked. Another erroneous notion is that by gourmandizing largely on literary swill, people will come in time to relish and prefer a sound diet; whereas they notoriously do nothing of the kind. The illiterate person often gave a pretty good account of himself in the way of observation and reflection, which with his head stuffed full of rubbish he can no longer be expected to do, nor does do.

Brussels, 16 August – The Exposition being out at Laeken, the city is not overly crowded, but rather the contrary. The hotels are full, but the people who occupy them evidently come in too late and are too tired to appear on the streets, so it is quite pleasant to wander about. I feel about seeing the Exposition as Panurge felt about seeing the Pope: “I have seen three of them, and the sight of them has not much bettered me,” so I shall take my time about seeing this one. I hear ten million people have visited it already, so probably I shall not be missed if I don’t get around to go. The opera here is running all summer, on a limited repertory, and the annual kermesse is going on quite as if there were no counter-attraction out at Laeken. Brussels is all spruced up on the main boulevard between the Bourse and the

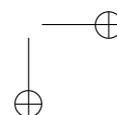
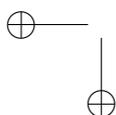


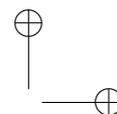
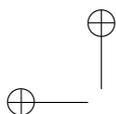


North Station, but the rest of the town seems unchanged, save for a general air of greater prosperity, which is quite noticeable.

17 August – The opera has a new conductor, which it has long needed. He gave an interpretation of *Traviata* last night which was unlike any I ever heard; most scholarly, and pure tragedy throughout, with the occasional light conversational melodies merely peeping through. It was a superb performance, which I mean to see again and study. I once heard an interesting performance of *Traviata* in Berlin, which was unusual because it presented the people as a distinctly middle-class lot throughout. The father especially, instead of being the conventional figure, rather sinister, more or less unscrupulous and hypocritical, was a convincing middle-class character, puzzled and sad, who quite won one's sympathy. The idea of the play as given last night seems to me better, however; really perfect, in fact. The performance came to a full stop two or three times, to help out the sense of tragedy, which I never saw done before. It was rather a daring thing, but extremely effective.

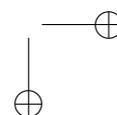
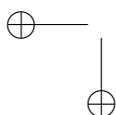
18 August – What is style? Something as hard to define as poetry, perhaps. Like poetry, you know it when you see it, but as Matthew Arnold says of poetry, it is something better understood in the verse of the artist than in the prose of the critic. Last night, in listening to *La Fille de Mme. Angot*, I thought again of my sinful and scandalous indifference to Gilbert and Sullivan's operettas. I know them all by heart, I so thoroughly understand and appreciate their great merit, and yet I

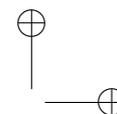
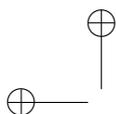




would not care two straws if I never heard one of them again. On the other hand, I would take any amount of trouble to hear an operetta of Lecocq, Offenbach, Hervé, Halévy, here at the Monnaie. I suppose the reason lies in this indefinable matter of grace and style. The French know the theatre so well that if you want that sort of thing done with the utmost grace, ease and style, get a Frenchman to write and stage it, with Belgians to act and sing it. The tableau at the end of the first act of *Mme. Angot* last night was, I think, the best I ever saw on any stage.

19 August – The Socialists held a great parade yesterday with 200,000 people in line, representing twenty-eight nationalities, I am told. They marched through town to the Exposition, where they held a *manifestation*, which probably lost some of its effect in a sharp shower that came up about the time the line reached Laeken. The marchers carried the usual banners, declaring against war, “capitalism,” the government, and pretty much everything in general. I thought of Dooley’s statement of the Populist credo, that they were “agin th’ banks, agin th’ Supreme Coort, an’ agin havin’ gas that can be blowed out be th’ human lungs.” The Belgians have always been a great people for pageantry, doing it better than any, I think, and yesterday they threw a great deal of style into details like the massing of their banners and emblems, thus making an effective exhibit, notwithstanding their paraphernalia was plain enough in detail, and apparently all homemade. I believe I shall go out of town tomorrow, towards Liège. I have never been there, and I think one could put in a few days in that region

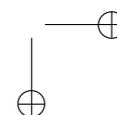
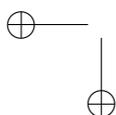


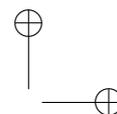
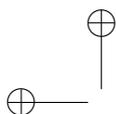


rather pleasantly, while waiting for Brussels to resume its normal life.

Dinant, 26 August – After a week spent in looking over Liège, Spa, and the regions round about, I have come down here for a few days, where there is little to do but enjoy the river and the pleasant country. Liège is interesting; I can't think why, in all the years I have spent in Belgium, I never went there. I could not have picked a worse time, at that, for Liège appears to be an overnight stopping-place for enormous hordes of French and Dutch tourists who are on their way from somewhere to somewhere, but where I don't know, and I could not make it seem worth while to ask. The volume of this sort of traffic has increased prodigiously in the past two years, and its character is mediocre. What a picturesque old acquaintance used to call "the gin'ral restiveness of the proletariats" seems to be expressing itself mostly in great irruptions of this kind, here as well as in America. The sight of them set me once more to wondering why there is always most fuss made over an evil or injustice at the time when it is least prevalent. We were well on our way to becoming a sober people when the great cry for prohibition arose. The demand for "women's rights" became urgent when women were better treated than they had ever been, and when they were worst treated there was no demand. The same is true of the demand for justice to the proletariat. I could never understand why this is so, but it seems to be a general rule.

At Liège I got another reminder that one of the scarcest things in Europe is a church-spire. The cathedral at Antwerp, planned for two, has only one. Malines has

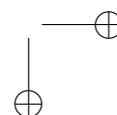
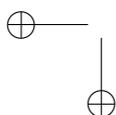


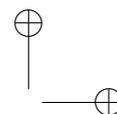
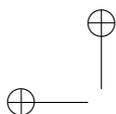


about two-thirds of one. Paris has none. St. Gudule's in Brussels, planned for two, has none. Apparently, at a fairly definite time, something happened. Historians give it an irrelevant name, like Francis I and the battle of Pavia, or Henri IV, or the last of the Valois – some name that does not come anywhere near covering the fact. It was something that happened inside the human being, so that from thinking for centuries in a certain set of terms he rather suddenly stopped thinking in those terms, and the structures that expressed the one order of thought were left unfinished, even though a couple of hundred years of hard labour and artistic devotion had been put in on them.

If I wanted to get up an exhibition of the horrors of war, I would make a collection of the war memorials put up in Europe since 1918. There are a couple at Spa which would qualify with something to spare, one being a statue of Foch that makes the eminent tactician look like something modeled by children out of snow. My notion is that the last fifteen years will go down in history as the world's worst period for all forms of art. The painter of the period seems to have made it his first object to convince the public that he did not know how to draw, and did not know how to use a brush. He may have known how to do both, but if so he succeeded admirably in keeping the fact concealed beyond reach of any possible suspicion. What the musician of the period was driving at, heaven only knows.

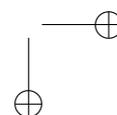
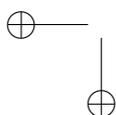
Liège has splendid museums, and charges no fees for seeing them, nor do the guards follow you around and watch you while you go through them. The folk-museum, which shows Walloon life from its earliest period, is re-

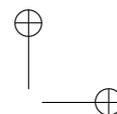
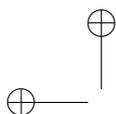




puted to be the best of its kind in the world. Wherever possible, they have secured a picture of the last representative of some extinct folk-craft, with the date of his death. There is an astonishing number of these, and their cumulative effect gives a considerable sense of pathos. One sees a certain poetry in the Socialist's contention that production should be for use rather than for profit. If the race were governed by reason, it would bend itself to striking a balance of advantage between the use system and the profit system, to combine the values of both. I believe some Socialists, for instance Mr. Norman Thomas, have a vague idea of the kind, but they are few. Perhaps the fatal flaw in a Socialist régime is its hideousness, its immense ennui; it may end by growing tired of itself. But again, perhaps this notion puts too much faith in the self preserving instinct of mankind; I am none too sure, either way.

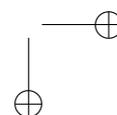
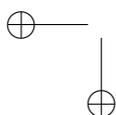
The Liégeois think exceeding well of Grétry, as they should; a revival of his music would do no harm to the musical taste of this century. No end of pains has been spent on the reconstruction of his house and on refurnishing it as it originally was, so that one can see pretty well how the average middle-class family lived at the end of the eighteenth century. The museum of fine arts has several pictures that interested me, such as Honthorst's four studies in the effect of light. Verlat's picture called *Le premier bébé* is very fine, and Wouters's *Tête d'Amour* gives the effect of being a good deal better than it is. The one that pleased me most is Saltini's picture of an old cobbler and his cat. The Walloon region seems to have given rise to several painters who had the social sense so highly developed in the character of Antoine

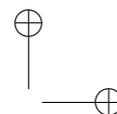
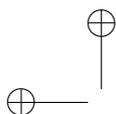




Wiertz. Gérard de Lairesse, born in 1640, painted the remarkable *Tribunal de la Sottise*, which is in the museum here. All it needs to make the allegory complete and perfect is that the principal figure should have a newspaper in his hand – any newspaper, French, English, American, German would do, though my patriotic pride would naturally call for an American newspaper. De France, of the same period as De Lairesse, has pictures here of high-life visiting various industrial plants and looking unmoved upon the conditions of labour – children stripping tobacco, etc. Taking these with the great work of Wiertz and the sculpture of Meunier and van Hove, one sees that Belgian art has sometimes had a commendable sense, as Dooley’s anarchist put it, that “th’ government is in th’ hands iv th’ monno-polists, an’ they’re cr-rushin’ th’ life out iv th’ prolotoorios.”

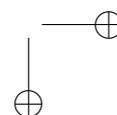
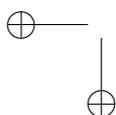
Now that the prolotoorios have reached their present commanding position, however, I think this sense is a little in danger of over-cultivation, and that the emphasis on it should be shifted. Perhaps this conviction accounts for my being taken nowadays for a senile Tory, whereas twenty years ago I was regarded as a violent radical. One of our prominent publicists told my friend R. last winter that I am “the most intelligent conservative in America.” It made me take stock of myself and my philosophy very closely, and I can say to a certainty that, except on one point, I have not changed a single item of the beliefs I held thirty years ago, or moved an inch to the right or left of any position I held then. I was always for justice, and I still am; I was never for class or party, nor am I now. I believe, as Chief Justice Jay said in perhaps the greatest opinion he ever wrote, that “justice is always

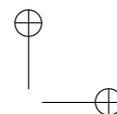
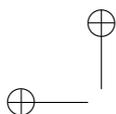




the same, whether it is due from one man to a million, or from a million to one man.” For the monno-polist, *qua* monno-polist, or for the prolotoorio, *qua* prolotoorio, I do not care, nor have I ever cared, two straws; but for any and every injustice visited upon either, I care profoundly. In my view, which I believe is the historical view, no good ever came from the application of one injustice to the cure of another. No good ever came, nor I believe can any ever come, of a mere shifting of preponderance among economic groups or social classes; nor yet out of any change from one economic system to another which does no more than shift the incidence of injustice. I can not see that all this has anything in common with radicalism or conservatism. I should say it is about equally far from both.

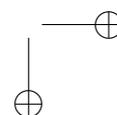
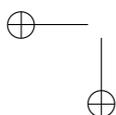
The one point on which I have changed my views – or rather, I should say, the one on which I feel great doubt and uncertainty – is important. I wish I could give myself more assurance about it than I can. Up to four years ago, I was an anarchist. I thought, and still think, that if one accept the doctrine that human nature will in the long run show itself capable of indefinite improvement, the only logical social philosophy is that of anarchism. I took this doctrine more or less ready-made, and accepted its logical implications. Of late, however, my faith in this doctrine has become impaired, not to the point of disbelief, but of serious uncertainty; and my views of government have been provisionally modified in consequence. I have tried to set them forth in an orderly way, in a little book which is now being published. In no other respect than this, as far as I am aware, has my philosophy undergone any change whatever.

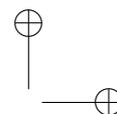
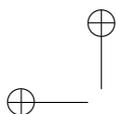




Dinant, 27 August – Everything seems to show that Mussolini is bent on war, and will carry through; yet I can not see any reason whatever for his doing so. The situation is most puzzling to me. I can see every reason for his putting as many men as possible under military law, and for making energetic demonstrations of military force, but I would have said a week ago that he had no more idea of levying actual war against Ethiopia than against Persia. Some say he is after oil; but if there were oil in Ethiopia, the English would have arranged a system of concessions there long ago. Perhaps circumstances “marshal him the way that he was going,” like Macbeth, or like the man in Josh Billings’s little allegory, so pertinent to dictators, who took the bull by the horns. It is the first international situation I have ever seen, on which I could not make a rational guess; but when I reach Brussels again I shall have better information, perhaps, and can fish some sort of meaning out of Mussolini’s actions. Newspapers reveal nothing to show that anybody has any better idea of what he is up to than I have.

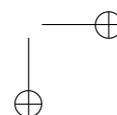
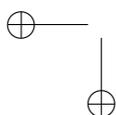
28 August – A pleasant ride of four hours to Namur, by boat. The river is locked up tight by dams and sluices so that I fancy the danger of flood is at a minimum. We went through six locks on a ride of something like twenty miles. The river’s course is sightly, though nothing to compare with the Mosel’s, between Trier and Cochem. As for the man-made features of the landscape, they mostly give warning against hasty generalizations in the matter of taste and style. The Belgians, who seem able to put great style into everything they do, are far behind the Germans in their treatment of a river, and the Germans

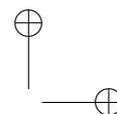
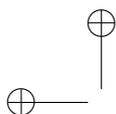




are supposed to have a very weak and poor sense of style. One sees here too the most wretched specimens of recent domestic architecture. Between Namur and Profondeville the river is lined with villas, most of them rather pretentious, and one wonders how a Belgian could be induced to live in such an eyesore. The occasional older building, on the other hand, often has dignity and style. The owners of these modern villas, however, whom one would take to be sheer barbarians, seem always to know what to do with flowers. There is an immense profusion of flowers everywhere, beautifully laid out in the best of taste. The gardens are always arranged with a view to the total effect; not to detail, as the English gardens are. There is a good example of this in the layout of flowers around Grétry's statue, at Liége. The total effect of colour and pattern, made up of ageratum, statice, low-growing begonias and two kinds of geranium, is very fine, even though the elements are so simple and rather plain.

In the matter of sculpture, painting, etching and music, one must give the Belgians credit for having done better by far than other countries, as far as I have seen, during the riot of hideousness that has prevailed since 1920. They experimented very cautiously with departures from tradition, and quickly gave them up. One wonders all the more, therefore, that they are content to live in such ugly houses as these gingerbread brick villas. I saw an excellent show the other day that some young sculptors have put on in Brussels, and while Brussels has its full share of villainous war memorials, it is fair to remember that the worst of them were contributed by other countries, and that some of them, like the

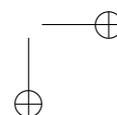
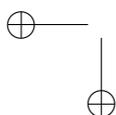


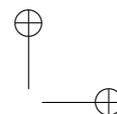
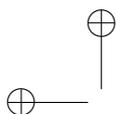


memorial of the aviators, are really very good. French taste seems to have hardened itself in its sins. I saw pictures yesterday of the new monument at Soissons and the figures that have just now been put up on the Butte de Chalmont, and one would say that any invading force that could survive the sight of them would be irresistible.

29 August – The news of the young queen’s death came in at noon; a shocking thing, no doubt, but only what is repeated and repeated everywhere every day, involving humbler persons but often as valuable, sometimes more so, who die and make no sign. I rather imagine that when things settle down a bit, they may leave some more or less general resentment against having their feelings wrought up by rulers who fool away human life out of a mere mania for speeding or climbing rocks. It is an unfair thing, and persons in that position should be above it – or persons in any position, for that matter, since one always has a responsibility to oneself, first and foremost, whether one has any to others or not. To the common mind, the line between bravery and asininity is practically invisible, and it is a pity to see it obliterated by persons who could so easily make it clearer.

This dynasty has been unfortunate. Old Leopold’s reign was a sorry affair, and Albert nobly made the best of a wretched job. Apparently there was nothing about it that agreed with his temperament, and he must have been unhappy in everything but his domestic relations. He seems to have been cut out for a hard-working scholar who might perhaps – I think probably – have developed enough imagination and humour to make him a reputable man of letters. Cassandre put it very well that he was

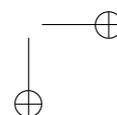
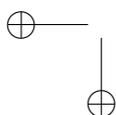


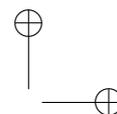
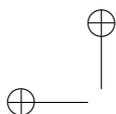


the sort of man who would shut himself up for six or seven years, and then come out with a first-rate history of Belgium or an exhaustive treatise on the philosophy of colonization. Poorly educated, he was always trying to make up for the deficiencies and defects of his training as best he could in the brief intervals between public functions that must have seemed as trivial as they actually were. Then he had a war on his hands, and became – of all incongruous things in the world – the “soldier king.” In all, he appears to me a figure of thorough frustration, and in the way he accepted his lot in life, a very noble one, I think by far the noblest of his time. He is always being praised for things that almost any one could do, whereas he ought to be remembered for something that not so many can do, and do so well. Not many can make such a good job of continuous renunciation as he did, but unfortunately it is the kind of job that gets little notice, less praise, and still less sympathetic understanding.

The newspapers are making the same disgusting display over the queen’s death that ours do in like circumstances, and for the same reason. Their reports are, as a critic said of Keats’s letters to Fanny Brawne, “like the love-letters of a butcher’s apprentice,” in their morbid self-abandonment, their lack of dignity and restraint. Newspapers aim to reach the masses, whom they judge to be exhibitionist by nature, but inarticulate; hence they try to “interpret” them in a kind of vicarious exhibitionism – one of the very lowest imaginable forms of enterprise.

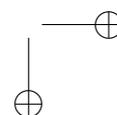
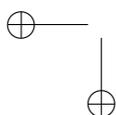
30 August – The newspapers say that Roosevelt has lost much ground in the last seven months, and may be

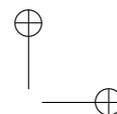
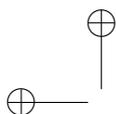




driven out of office. I doubt this, as he has too many people eating out of his hand. If a man can not buy his election with five billion dollars, he must be very unpopular indeed, much more so than Roosevelt. Still, as F. reminded me some time ago when I mentioned this, "we also have the secret ballot." It is of course presumable that not all the subsidized voters will stay bought, but I think most of them will. The matter is actually of small interest, however, for driving jobholders out of office is like the old discredited policy of driving prostitutes out of town. Their places are immediately taken by others who are precisely like them.

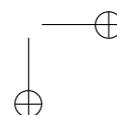
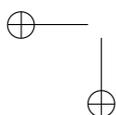
31 August – I can make absolutely nothing out of this Italo-Ethiopian affair, and I am really interested in it now, as a pure puzzle. Usually I have been able to get the ins and outs of an international imbroglio pretty quickly and correctly, but I can do nothing with this one. The French papers now report that the Ethiopian emperor has just given a concession of mineral rights covering half of Abyssinia to an Anglo-American corporation. If oil were actually there, I could see something in this, but American explorers have long ago canvassed Ethiopia and reported against it. The whole performance is mysterious. This last disclosure, however, uncovers a fine kettle of fish for the English, and the French papers are making the most of their chance. I believe that for once in a way the English Foreign Office and our State Department are telling the truth when they say they know nothing about the matter, but that will not help the English much in their plea of disinterestedness at Geneva next week.

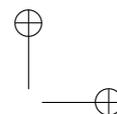
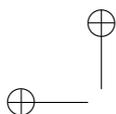




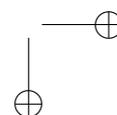
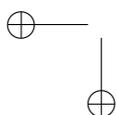
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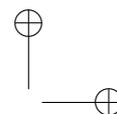
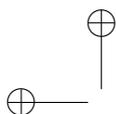
1 September – By accident I ran across a novel called *Gloria Mundi* the other day, written by Harold Frederic, back in the nineties. It brought back recollections of a whole shoal of topical fiction written in that day, and of some pretty good talent that was more or less wasted on it. As Aristotle says, fiction should not occupy itself with things as they are, but with things as they might be, and ought to be. Topical fiction and tendency fiction bear the seeds of early death within themselves; young writers ought to read three or four specimens from that period, to get a point of view on their own work. The book carried a lot of publisher's advertisements at the end, after the old manner, and I was interested in the quotations from reviews printed in reputable papers like the *Manchester Guardian* and the *London Times*, to see how ludicrously extravagant they now appear. The people who write book notices nowadays might learn humility and moderation from them – valuable qualities for their purpose and function.



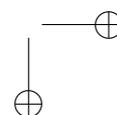
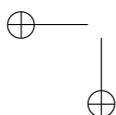


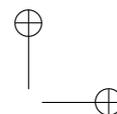
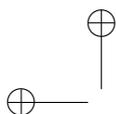
2 September – I begin to see why there are so few German tourists in evidence. I have not seen a dozen, all told. It appears that Hitler will not let anybody carry more than four dollars out of the country. Americans and English are curiously scarce here, notwithstanding the cheap money of Belgium. Practically all the tourists I have seen are Hollanders and French, of a very low order, who come in by motor, mostly on the innumerable circular tours that are advertised. These swarm everywhere, precisely as our tourists of a similar order, but with more ready money, did ten years ago. The “tourist trade” is the ruin of hotel-keeping and restaurant-keeping, considered as professions. The old type of hotel-keeper, indeed, has virtually disappeared, giving place either to a corporation or to one who aims to make all the money he can in three or four years, and then retire. There are few hotels now like the Straubinger at Gastein, which has passed from father to son for four hundred years, without a break. Old Franz-Josef offered Karl Straubinger a title, but he would not take it; he said he thought his family were probably pretty well known around there already – well enough to suit him, anyhow. But certainly there is no encouragement for a hotel-keeper or a restaurateur to take his job seriously. All I see here, even in the best establishments, makes me think of the superb place in New York that closed up after the war, the proprietor saying he had always been able to have gentlemen for clients and to serve them as gentlemen should be served, and now he was no longer able to do either. For instance, in the best restaurant in Liège the other night, two Dutch couples at the table next me made a dinner, first, on all the hors d’oeuvres there were in the house, with





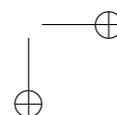
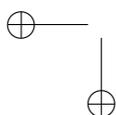
champagne; then a course of stuffed eggplant; then a chocolate parfait! Why do more than go through the motions for such vermin as that? Again, at the best hotel in Dinant one night – and in the “full season” too – a party of about twenty Hollanders, mostly young, filed in to a long table set in the middle of the dining-room. They had arrived by motorbus, evidently straight from the farm, under the guidance of a *Reisemarschall* who had a whistle hung from his neck on a black cord. The party sat down, the *Reisemarschall* blew a blast on his whistle, and they all folded their hands for a good two minutes of silent prayer before they began to hoist in provisions. It was one of the strangest performances I ever saw. All the rest of the people in the dining-room suspended operations on their food when the whistle blew, not knowing what was up, and then kept respectfully quiet until the exercises were over, meanwhile surveying the group in considerable astonishment. Another thing I notice is the complete disappearance of formality in dress. People now come into public dining-rooms in various states of dress and undress that would have got them thrown out twenty-five years ago. In short, one sees the same thing now at Spa and Dinant as at Narragansett Pier and Newport. They are entirely given over to great irruptions of the masses, which have forced the more civilized remnant into a sort of Robin Hood existence in inconspicuous shelters from which they do not emerge. It is a great and impressive allegory of the times, reminding one of the scenes in Louis-Philippe’s palace at the end of his reign. The thing I can not understand is what the masses get out of it, for they do not appear to be having a very good time, and there is little for them to do – at Spa especially,

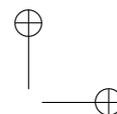
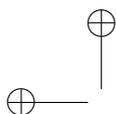




there is nothing for any day-tripper to do, whether he be civilized or barbarian, poor or rich, and at Dinant he would come to the end of his string in a couple of hours. They get the benefit of a break in routine, which is of course invaluable, but it seems that they could contrive one that would pay better dividends. The old life at these places was tedious enough; it had a certain charm of grace and good manners that was very pleasant, but unless a person had something substantial to do meanwhile, the charm petered out in pretty short order. I never could see that the regular addicts of such resorts in the old days seemed really to be enjoying themselves much more than the masses do now, but rather that they were going through the motions of an uninteresting routine. The sum of it is, of course, that the aids to a happy life, like the aids to a noble life, are mostly within oneself.

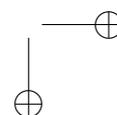
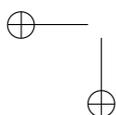
3 September – My first meal of a superb national dish which comes on annually at this time for a few days only – partridge and cabbage; the name does not sound promising. I believe that frying-size chicken or guinea hen would do pretty well, prepared the same way. I mentioned this to Cassandre once, but she shook her head obstinately, and would have none of it. I thought she was merely taking the *ignotum pro magnifico*, but that was not the case. What it came to was that I was suggesting the sophistication of a very old and venerable tradition, and therefore the idea was evil and against God and not to be thought of for a moment. It is hard to say in what particular mood she is most charming, but perhaps it is when she is in one of her fits of obstinacy. I never saw the combination of sweetness and stubbornness so

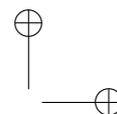
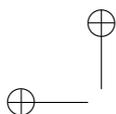




well carried out in any one else, or with so much wisdom and good sense behind it.

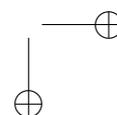
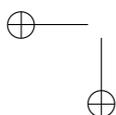
4 September – The queen’s body is at last buried, with a tremendous demonstration. The poor little king walked behind her coffin all the way to Laeken. The incident is taken as bearing out Horace’s platitude of *pallida mors aequo pede pulsat pauperum tabernas regumque turres*, but it set me to wondering merely whether the price of rapid transportation is not too high – not only when added up in terms of life and limb, but also, and mainly, in terms of general deterioration and dishevelment. I think it is, especially when one considers how little, actually, that is worth having is got out of it. One can go from New York to Chicago in four hours, and the morning papers of either town can be read in the other at noon, and this is supposed to be a valuable achievement – but why? One goes from a vacuous dishevelling life in New York to a vacuous dishevelling life in Chicago, and the newspapers merely inform one that such is the kind of life lived in both places. I doubt greatly that the sum total of human happiness is increased by increasing facilities for keeping the human body in rapid motion, or that the capacity for enjoyment is enhanced; I should say rather the opposite. I see that English public opinion is being stirred up by the great number of casualties on the roads – an astonishing number – I had no idea there were so many. Probably the English will come to the philosophical view of lives lost in this way as part of the overhead of a “basic industry,” but at present some there seem to regard them as evidence of a useless and culpable brutalizing of a whole society.

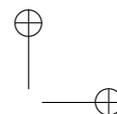
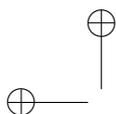




5 September – I see that General Hertzog, down in South Africa, has come out with the statement that in his opinion, the Italo-Abyssinian affair “is the beginning of a long and, if we must judge by what has gone before, one of the bloodiest and cruelest periods the world has ever known.” Well, but after twenty years of elaborate moral preparation for such a period, how can one look for anything else? Is there a people anywhere that has not been undergoing an intensive moral training for just that state of things? I know of none. There seems to be immovably fixed in the human mind the idea that you can sow the wind diligently as long as you like, and then somehow get out of reaping the whirlwind; and no such thing was ever done or can be done. The men going to war in Ethiopia were little boys when Mussolini came on the stage; they have been systematically brutalized without cessation ever since. Hitler’s youth have been as systematically brutalized for a shorter period. Ours have been as systematically materialized. Nationalism, all round, means an attitude of suspicious and inimical watchfulness towards foreigners. Patriotism is everywhere a compound of pride, arrogance and pugnacity. All this being as we have made it, what should we expect from it? What can anyone gifted with even the most rudimentary sense of cause and effect expect from it? Αρξή πολιτείας εω προφη. But what statesmanship! and what training!

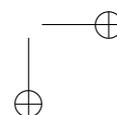
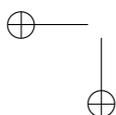
6 September – If the gals are going to keep on wearing their new style of halo hats, they will have to get out a new style of make-up to match them. Blackened eyes and gory lips, which give the general effect of a tough

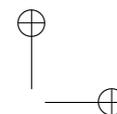
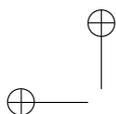




adventurer, do not go with them at all well. I should say that if the fashion holds, the next style of make-up will be pale and waxy, in an ivory tint, and the gal with the roundish, madonna-like type of face will be in luck. I often wonder for whom or for what purpose this business of make-up is designed. I doubt that it is for any favourable effect on men, because women have told me that men largely dislike it, and if we can take Juvenal's word, they disliked it in his day. I can not see any other purpose that it would be supposed to serve, so it would seem to be something that is done because other women do it, which in turn seems to betoken a thundering lot of time and work wasted.

7 September – Three women were on the street selling flowers, when presently a man came along, evidently an acquaintance, who produced a snuffbox and passed it around. Each woman took a pinch, sneezed politely, and after a few words the man passed on. A most unusual sight; one that I have never seen before. His was the only snuffbox I ever saw in use but one – my grandmother's, and she died when I was five years old. The incident of the snuffbox happened as I was on my way up to the museum of natural history to look at the ten iguanodons that were dug out of the coal mines at Bernissart. I am told that this exhibit is unique, and I can well believe it. They are mounted precisely as they lay in the silt where they were found. It is supposed, I believe, that they met their death in a river flood, as there seems to be evidence of such a flood, and their remains were quickly silted over, and so preserved – a remarkable sight. The museum is well worth visiting, admirably arranged and the exhibits

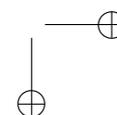
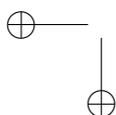


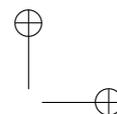
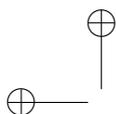


so well explained that one needs no catalogue. It seems extraordinary that so small an area as that of Belgium could produce the number and variety of fossil remains that one sees there.

8 September – Reading Mlle. V.'s copy of Sun Yat-sen's conferences, wherein he expounds his doctrine of "triple demism." She recommends it as of interest, but I saw little in it. The work shows occasional flashes of insight, but it deals with the surface of things as a rule, and prescribes measures that are in part superfluous, in part inert. I can say nothing about his analysis of Chinese society, of course, but if it be correct, then what I have just said holds true. He appears, in short, to have nothing to say but what the liberal Socialists are saying; I fancy that he and Mr. Norman Thomas would get on famously.

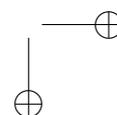
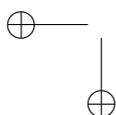
The attempts to tinker and cobble a civilization that has long since seen its best days are all vain; a serious person can take no interest in them. Nor yet can one take interest in attempts to accelerate its break-up, for they always result in something worse. There is no social engineering that can radically renovate a civilization and change its character, and at the same time keep it going, for civilization is an affair of the human spirit, and the direction of the human spirit can not be reset by means that are, after all, mechanical. The best thing is to follow the order of nature, and let a moribund civilization simply rot away, and indulge what hope one can that it will be followed by one that is better. This is the course that nature will take with such a civilization anyway, in spite of anything we do or do not do. Revolts, revolutions, dictatorships, experiments and innovations in political

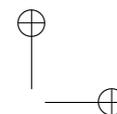
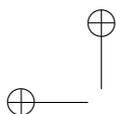




practice, all merely mess up this process and make it a sadder and sorrier business than it need be. They are only so much machinery, and machinery will not express anything beyond the intentions and character of those who run it, and what are they but such as we see about us? Give them a plan of a perfect social order, or by some magic set up a complete working model of such a plan, and what would they do with it? If man himself were also only a machine, the thing would be easy enough, but he is not. Yesterday I happened on a large crowd of men from the stock exchange here, and as I looked them over, heard their conversation, and reflected that the machinery of the merchant State has been run since the seventeenth century, and is now everywhere run, by men with their ideals, ideas, intentions and general spirit, I wondered just how much clear gain has come from displacing the feudal State by the merchant State, and how much may reasonably be expected from displacing the merchant State by the proletarian State.

To get the taste of these reflections out of my mouth, I went to the opera and heard Adolphe Adam's *Si j'étais roi*, a delightful piece, and wonderfully well produced. It is unusual in that there is so little for the women singers to do – really nothing, aside from the bit of comedy in the last act, and some coloratura in the second that has the air of being lugged in by the ears. Mme. Clairbert did it, and did it well, as she always does that sort of work; curiously, her voice loses the dryness that it has normally and becomes rather mellow, which is something I never observed in any other soprano. She is visiting here now, and her public makes much of her for auld lang syne, which is pleasant. She was always Cassandre's pet

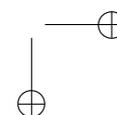
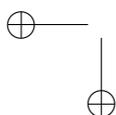


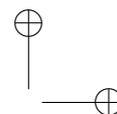
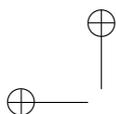


aversion on the stage, and in truth I would have liked to see some one a little more convincing in what is pretty nearly a soubrette part.

9 September – I ventured out to the Exposition after all, but on a slack day, and went only to the exhibit on ancient art. It is fairly good, but not nearly so interesting as I expected, except in a few particulars such as the Brueghels which were sent up from Vienna. They ought to stay here, by rights, for their transfer to Vienna was sheer robbery. Many things are exhibited at the Exposition that I did not expect to see, and many that I did expect to see are absent; but this is the case, more or less, with all such collections. Still, it is strange not to see a Memling, van Eyck, ver Meer, Jordaens, Douw, anywhere about. The Rembrandts are poor specimens, and the Halses mostly so. On the whole, to my unprofessional eye, the exhibition at Antwerp is a shade better. The buildings and general aspect of the Exposition are extremely ugly. I may go out once again to look at the exhibit of modern art, but I am not sure that I shall.

10 September – The French sense of the stage, which comes out in full force in *Si j'étais roi*, appears at a very commonplace level in *Mignon*, which I listened to for the sake of hearing some of the new singers, who are exceptionally good. I got up a great admiration for Mme. Pauwels, who was Mignon, and for the Philina of Mme. Floriaval, who in spite of her name seems to be as pretty a little Flemish girl as ever was raised in Antwerp, and she has a very engaging lisp. The tenor's make-up gave

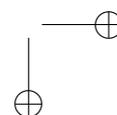
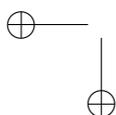


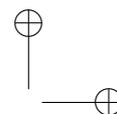
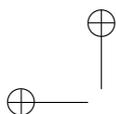


him a close resemblance to Mr. Roosevelt, which was most annoying; Mignon is hard enough to sit through without anything like that. The Monnaie is in splendid condition, the best I have seen for years. It brought to my mind a very handsome remark by Bill Guard, the Metropolitan's old press agent. I ran across him in the lobby one day, some years ago, as I was coming out from a dreadful performance of the *Tales of Hoffmann*, and we chatted a few moments. He asked me where I was keeping myself nowadays, and when I told him I was mostly in Brussels, he said, "Ah, then you are hearing the best French opera in the world." I thought it was an extremely decent thing for him to say, since his own house was putting on quite a bit of French opera, and while what he said was true enough, a less generous man in his position might easily have let it go unsaid.

I woke up this morning with a curious fragment of a dream in mind. I thought I heard Lincoln Steffens say, "Life is just as interesting as it was in my first day, now that I am in my last day, or almost my last." It is odd, because I seem never to dream, though I believe it is said one always does, whether aware of it or not. I can not recall being aware of having dreamed in more than half a dozen instances, at most. Also I am sure I have not thought of Steffens, or met with anything that suggested him, for a month or more.

11 September – The royal box at the opera is not draped. This may be according to custom, for anything I know, but none the less agreeable. In general one sees much less ostentation in this matter here than formerly, as in the United States where it has well-nigh disappeared –

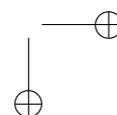
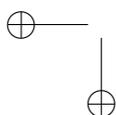


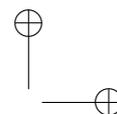
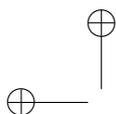


a stroke of decency and real humanitarianism in which America seems to have led the world. One's griefs are one's own, and it is downright inconsiderate, as well as wretched bad taste, to parade the evidence of them before a public which has no concern with them.

12 September – The rue des Bouchers was always the most interesting street in town, to my notion. It and one or two of its short feeders, like the rue des Dominicains, have preserved more character intact than any other. The curious street called the rue d'Une Personne opens into the rue des Bouchers; it is not quite five feet wide, and runs a considerable length. The shops in that district carry remarkable stocks, like the shops in the quarter west of lower Sixth Avenue, which I believe are the best in New York, from a housekeeper's point of view. Food is expensive here, and since the debasement of the currency there is a great dearth of all manner of imported goods, especially French goods, which used to be common and reasonably cheap.

I went to the opera last night for no reason but to hear a new soprano, and I was rewarded by hearing a purely French version of the *Barber of Seville*, done in the grand style. It was really superb. The performance I heard here five or six years ago, and one I heard later in Toulouse, were more or less travesties, because they were done with a conscious effort after the Italian manner, and I anticipated the same sort of thing again. For the lesson scene, Mme. de Gavre sang Proch's Air most delightfully. The Monnaie is now at the very top of its quality. I used to read statements every now and then in America that interest in opera is dying out, but that is certainly not

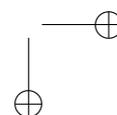
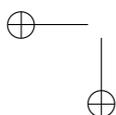


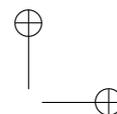
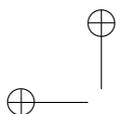


the case here; at least I can see no evidence that it is, and every evidence that it is not. Interest in such opera as we get in America may be dying out, and I should think it would be, or indeed that it would have died long ago; but that is another matter.

Every time I hear the *Barber* I seem to get a heightened sense of what a fellow Beaumarchais must have been. There are a few characters whose history leaves one consumed with regret that one was never able to know them, and Beaumarchais was one. He must have had a world of fun in his lifetime; he appears to have had the knack of turning everything he did into a source of enjoyment, and there is no greater gift of fortune than that. As George Sand said, for life to be fruitful, life must be felt as a joy; there is no doubt about it, and it is something that the “new order” of society, whatever that is, has yet to learn. The thought turns me back to the Monnaie again. Everything about the theatre, every job connected with it, is very hard work, yet one of the distinguishing things about the performances at the Monnaie is that the performers seem to be having such a good time; their artistry seems to be a source of pleasure to them. One can not say, of course, that it actually is, but it appears to be; they give that impression invariably.

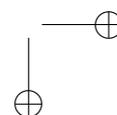
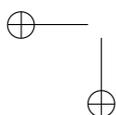
13 September – The “responsible statesmen” all over the world are now like a herd of horses in a quicksand, every effort they make only getting them deeper in. The British Foreign Minister has spoken, and the French minister, Laval, has his turn next. I can not yet see what Mussolini’s game is in shipping troops to Ethiopia, nor does any one here seem able to make a guess – unless,

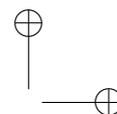
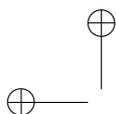




indeed, my original guess be correct, and I think it is, that he has to make some sort of diversion to hold his job. What really worries the English and French is the fear that Mussolini may be a bad neighbour down in Africa, maybe taking over Egypt, or picking off some other choice bits of territory that they have an interest in. Quite possibly they are right. Mussolini may easily have some such idea in mind. In that case the question is simply whether to fight him now or later. Laval is in a bad position. If he sides with England, it will give Hitler a great leg up; and if he does not, he can not expect England to stand by him in future emergencies where French interests are more directly threatened. The British are now making a tremendous play of disinterestedness and high moral motive, which is a frightfully bad sign, boding no good to anybody. I vaguely recall a phrase of Remy de Gourmont to the effect that when morality triumphs, very shameful things take place – *très vilaines choses*. I hear that Hitler will unfold his foreign policy next Sunday, and the papers say that Mussolini has ordered all Italy to be ready to turn out on short notice for a great national demonstration. Perhaps this is all the reply he will make. I wonder whether the British and French peoples can be got to back up their governments as far as actual war, but probably they can. I only hope our meddling fools down in Washington will conquer the itch for sticking their nose in other people's business, and keep quiet. If they do, it will be a miracle, but miracles sometimes happen.

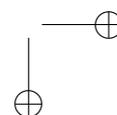
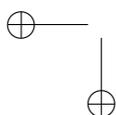
14 September – The worst of this Ethiopian mess is the enormous amount of bargaining power it gives to

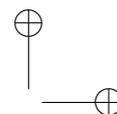
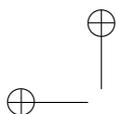




Hitler. He can get practically any price he wants if Mussolini does not back down, and I do not see how that can happen now. I believe England and France would give back the colonies and throw in Danzig and Memel, if he would agree to stand paws off. It may be that some such arrangement was already made – or the offer of it – as Laval’s price for coming in with England. It remains to be seen whether Hitler is smart enough to play Bismarck’s old part of the “honest broker” successfully. His speech today may give some hint of it, though I should think he would keep very quiet on that subject, and talk about something else. It is a disgusting fact, but a fact nevertheless, that if things go on as they are now set to go, Hitler will hold the balance of power in Europe. There is a fine irony in this, when one recalls the events of twenty years ago. I remember walking down the rue Belliard with Brand Whitlock one Sunday morning in November, 1914, when Whitlock suddenly stopped and asked me, “Have you any hope at all of the human race?” Twenty years have thrown a good deal of light on that question.

Reports seem to show that the regular pre-election effort to start a boom in the stock market is on. Americans have a strange notion that the ordinary laws of economics do not apply to them, so doubtless they will think they are prosperous if the boom starts, and that deficits and indebtedness are merely signs of how prosperous they are. An extraordinary people, hardly to be believed existing. I see that Mr. Hull made on the whole a creditable reply to Hitler’s protest against Magistrate Brodsky’s “insult to Germany,” although it seems that he might have stopped with a courteous statement that the

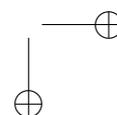
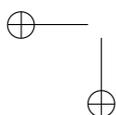


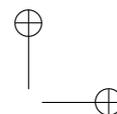
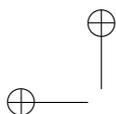


matter was out of his jurisdiction, without going on to characterize Brodsky's action. If one is measuring insults, Hitler's observations on Brodsky are quite as inadmissible as Brodsky's reflections on the German political system, for his remarks were not based on the plea that Brodsky was acting *ultra vires*, or that he was a swine, but that he is a Jew – and this, both technically and from the standpoint of propriety, is a purely extraneous consideration.

15 September – A strong smell of cabbage in the air today revives my ancient wonder why nature contrived that all winter foods set up such a stench in cooking. Cabbage, turnips, parsnips, Brussels sprouts, onions, cauliflower, kohlrabi – there is hardly an exception. Perhaps if one were suggesting improvements in the order of nature, one might begin by wishing for a change in this matter. It were pleasanter that our summer foods should stink, for then our houses are wide open to the air; but why should any of them stink? What purpose is served by it?

16 September – It seems about time for another war. A great exhibit of women's autumn styles was held here today. Most of the dresses are so elaborate and involve so many expensive accessories that no woman who had not a vast deal of money to throw away could think of wearing them. This is a bad sign. Another one is the excessive and repulsive make-up that one sees on women; so much of it is really fantastic. I have noticed several women of a very dark complexion who paint themselves a peculiar saffron colour, and daub up their lips to a tint that is almost chrome yellow, all of which gives them a

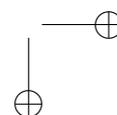
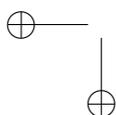


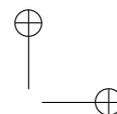
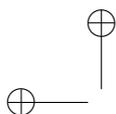


horrible appearance, which is rather too bad, as I can see that they would be pretty if they let themselves alone. A hard run of jaundice would save them much money and time; yet if that look were imposed by jaundice rather than by art, I suppose they would think it very ugly.

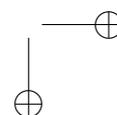
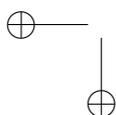
17 September – I have often wished I could eat as these people do. Not that I would wish to do it, or would do it, but I wish I were able to do it. Being often in restaurants, I notice that while almost without exception the people eat very daintily and gracefully, never greedily, they get through a great deal of food in a very short time because they never stop, like the Lake Shore Limited, which covers its run in short order with no great speed. I don't see how they can enjoy their meals, but apparently they do. Perhaps one reason why Americans eat so little is that they habitually live at higher tension; there must be many nervous and febrile stomachs among them, as indeed I know there are. Still, climate may have something to do with it, for in my own case I notice that I eat much more here than in America, though I live a far quieter and more secluded life there than here; never going out of an evening, for instance, while here I often do, sometimes three or four nights a week. I observe a great increase in water-drinking here in Brussels; once or twice of late I have seen a whole roomful of people dining, with nothing but water on any table.

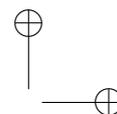
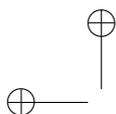
18 September – The Royal Theatre has been entirely done over, one might almost say rebuilt, and most successfully, preserving all the character of the old with the conveniences and mechanical improvements of the new.





It is now a beautiful little playhouse; I have never seen one that seemed so precisely right. I went there last night to hear a Viennese troupe in Kalman's operetta, *Die Czardasfürstin*, a superb thing, superbly done. I do not know when I have had such a happy merry evening. I shall go again. The beauty and chivalry of Brussels were not very well represented, for some reason, probably because they are not accustomed to hearing any language on the stage but French and Flemish. Sitting next me was a richly dressed Japanese girl, beautiful and exquisite almost beyond description. She was with a party of Hollanders – this operetta has just made a great success in Holland – and she evidently knew German uncommonly well, for she did not miss a single point. After all, it is the language of one's childhood that one loves. I never knew a word of French until I was past twenty, and though I know French now as well as I know English – or perhaps better, since there is so much less of it to know – it remains always purely a literary language for me; I have no feeling for it and never speak it but under compulsion, and then wretchedly. Cassandre said once that her teeth had taken on a permanent “wire edge” from listening to my French, and I can well understand how that might be. On the other hand, I have a feeling for German that runs back to my childhood, when I hardly knew whether I was speaking German or English. The German word may be an ill-favoured thing, as Touchstone said of his lady love, but it is in a sense my own. It recalls the accents of those two highly cultivated, intelligent and accomplished people whose presence in our frontier town was so unaccountable – Lena von Molitor and Claudius Christian Friedrich Bahr. No one knew whence they

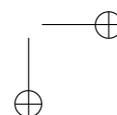
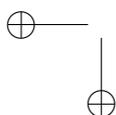


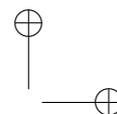
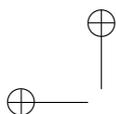


came or why they were there; the lady married a dull lawyer, and was unhappy. Bahr suddenly disappeared, and was never heard of. Again, German words recall the two years I lived at a later period among Germans in Illinois, and bring to my mind what superb people they were – remnants of the old stock of '48. Here in Belgium the Teutonic Flemish seems so much more nearly my own than French, though I know French so much better. The contrast is always before me in the street signs and public announcements, which are always posted in both languages. I crossed an out-of-the-way street yesterday called Potters' Street, no doubt because it was the headquarters of that trade in the Middle Ages and later, and I noticed then how much livelier significance the word *Potbakkersstraat* had for me than the corresponding *rue des Potiers*.

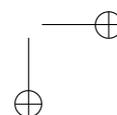
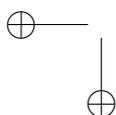
19 September – A most astonishing thing! I see in the newspapers that a rich and prominent Belgian family, the Solvays, have set up a fund to encourage Alpine climbing, as a memorial to King Albert! What, really, is one to think of that? The only match for it that one could imagine is for some one to set up a fund to encourage reckless driving, as a memorial to the late queen. The idea is beyond all comment.

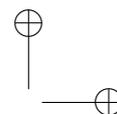
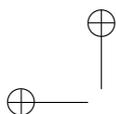
20 September – Four hours of *Peer Gynt* last night, a superb production in every way, and it was worth something to be on hand on one of the rare occasions when M. Corneil de Thoran directs the performance. But I am temperamentally not up to the true inwardness of high-grade Skowhegian drama. At one time or another I





have seen *Ghosts*, *The Bells*, *The Wild Duck*, *The Doll's House*, and now *Peer Gynt*, and as my old friend Abe Potash might say, I would *oser* sit through one of them again if I never sold a dollar's worth more goods so long as I live. The town seems to take to *Peer Gynt*; there was a large audience of respectful and sympathetic hearers. I shall go back once more, however, to hear the *Czardasfürstin* as a pick-me-up. That operetta makes one hopeful; it is so thoroughly clean, so merry and tuneful, and it has enough of a sound and sincere plot to hold it together consistently and make it something to be remembered. I wonder whether political satire will ever be put on the stage again as delicately and effectively as it is in *Mme. Angot* and the *Grande Duchesse*. Never as delicately, I think; the tradition of stage-satire has become too coarsened. I see that Grace Moore's new departure has encouraged some firm of producers to put the *Tales of Hoffmann* in the cinema, and that the text will be "adapted" by a woman novelist named Baum. Poor old Offenbach! *Hoffmann* would make a good film for the cinema if it were treated intelligently, but when one has seen what the Metropolitan does with it, one has very little hope of its chances in the cinema. I see that *Peer Gynt* is on in Paris and London, as well as here, so I wish them joy of it. I had occasion to remark once more how completely people here throw themselves into the emotions represented on the stage. Large Belgian men with hard faces snivelled audibly over the pathos spread before them. It has often seemed to me that the proportion of softhearted, sympathetic people runs higher in Brussels than elsewhere, though it may be only that they are less self-conscious about showing what

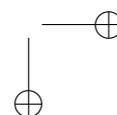
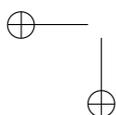


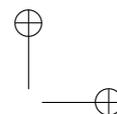
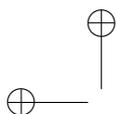


they feel. I doubt this, however; I think the proportion is actually higher.

21 September – The English have for years been patiently hammering the idea into Continental heads that tea is not a medicine. If you asked for tea here twenty-five years ago, they would probably send you to the drugstore for it. One can buy very fine tea here now, but in public places one gets invariably the stew of coarse black tea that the lower class of English – and some not so low – consume in vast quantities. For that matter, the general run of tea in America is nothing to be proud of. In this respect, as in all others, it is now the taste of the masses that sets the standard everywhere.

22 September – Old Baron X gossiping for an hour, mostly about public affairs. Rather cynical, no end experienced, and wise as they come. I had heard before that there are some popular complaints about the king, nothing of any serious consequence, probably, but of the sort that easily becomes magnified in passing from mouth to mouth. His Bavarian uncle appeared at the queen's funeral, and it was promptly remembered that he did not show up when King Albert was buried. Then, as soon as the queen's funeral was over, the king posted off to visit his Bavarian grandmother who had not been heard of before – nobody knew he had one. Miserable trifles as these are, they count heavily with popular sentiment, making a king's life as circumscribed as that of a Presbyterian minister in an American country town. Another matter, not so trivial, relates to public policy. There are two plans on foot for fortifying the eastern



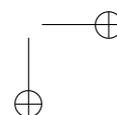
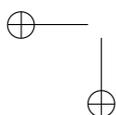


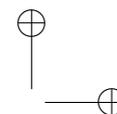
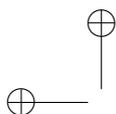
frontier. One is to fortify the border, which is much the better for France, and also much more expensive. The other, and cheaper, is to construct the defences at some distance behind the border. The Minister of War is supposed to favour the first plan, and this puts him under popular suspicion of being too Francophile in his sympathies, and too open to suggestions from the French General Staff. The question now is, which way, if either, the king's influence will run. Being a king may have its interest, but I would rather be anything else.

23 September – The little restaurant that I liked best, the *Ecrévisse*, is gone; its place is taken by a *charcuterie*. I have been going lately to the *Grégoire*, on the *rue des Bouchers*, which has much the same general character, though not quite. The food is about as good, but I miss the familiar surroundings.

25 September – I hear that a great international banking house has just made a large loan, more or less *sub rosa*, to the British government. This looks a bit bad to me in view of the Ethiopian mess – all the worse for the apparent secrecy. I may be misinformed, but I think that is unlikely, for the man who told me is very high up in such matters, and knows what is going on.

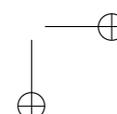
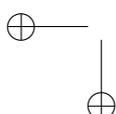
27 September – The Royal Flemish Opera opened the season last night with a gala performance of *Don Giovanni* that was highly creditable and interesting. The stage was uncommonly dark throughout, and I seemed to feel a general air of restraint and formality in both the performance and the audience, as compared with an evening at

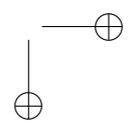
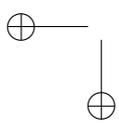
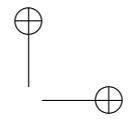
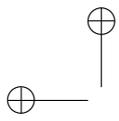


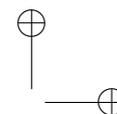
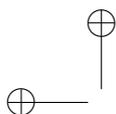


the Monnaie. The social manner of Antwerp is perhaps a little angular in its correctness, when on dress parade – very courteous, but lacking somewhat in easy cordiality. I like the town and its ways greatly, though I can see how a casual person might be a little put off by them until he got better acquainted. I was much impressed by the ballet, though I do not know why I should have expected anything less good. Having a little time in the afternoon, I looked over the museum of folklore. It is nothing to compare with the one at Liège, but I was struck by the collection of early books and pamphlets on magic; also the variety of charms, amulets, philtres and household remedies. They are most extraordinary. I suppose there is a large volume of just such matter current today in eastern Pennsylvania, but a person like myself, who is seldom in contact with superstitious practices, finds it hard to believe that they ever existed anywhere in such number.

30 September – I have never seen red umbrellas in Brussels until now. Women in New York have long carried them, but while other colours have been popular here, I have never seen red ones either in use or on sale; but now there are many.



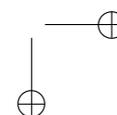
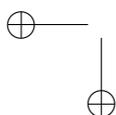


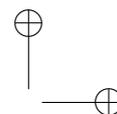
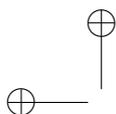


1935 October

2 October – Speaking English with Mlle. L. the other day made me think that English might be almost a beautiful language if we all spoke it with her accent and intonation. I have seldom heard anything more charming. She is a Flemish girl from Antwerp, who tells me that there is some snobbishness towards Flemish on the part of certain French-speaking people there. Being a good hard-headed Flemish gal, she refuses to speak French with them; and there you have the whole inwardness of the “language problem” and all the prejudices and antipathies that grow out of it. No one likes the implication that his language is the mark of a socially inferior race or class.

5 October – Well, Mussolini has turned loose on the Ethiopians, and the flow of money to the United States has begun in earnest. Small people are putting what money they have into such dollars as they can get, and hoarding the dollars. Even in Belgium, where no one expects any actual trouble this year, the banks are completely cleaned out of American money, and can not raise

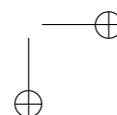
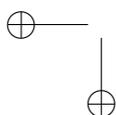


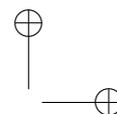
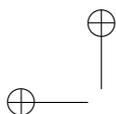


any more from London or Paris to meet the demand. Life here is not too pleasant now, for though no one looks for war in western Europe, everybody is uneasy and preoccupied with thoughts of war, and this makes things depressing. I am willing enough to go back to New York until the prospect clears up a little, if it ever does, which I doubt.

7 October – Taking the average of my experience, I would say that the worst cooking in the world is English, with German next, and American third. German cooks, however, do some few things better than anyone, certain soups, for example – mock turtle, lentil, ox-tail. You can also trust a German with a potato, unreservedly; and he will make you the best compote of fruit that you ever had, and a first-class salad dressing of the type known as French, but far better than any French French dressing I ever had, except the one that Cassandre makes regularly, which is probably the best in the world. A German will do pretty well with anything that lends itself to boiling, but few things do that. Oddly, almost any one can do better with sauerkraut than a German. They boil it to pulp, and bring it on as tasteless as paper.

8 October – It is the internal condition of the European countries, rather than the prospect of war, that is most depressing just now, and that turns one's thoughts to America with something almost like tolerance. Everywhere the State is absorbing more and more of the national income; production is being loaded heavier and heavier with the dead weight of State expenditure. Even Holland, I see, has just had an extra load of taxes piled

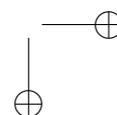
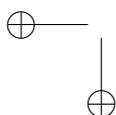


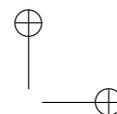
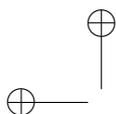


on it for “national defence.” All this discourages production, weakens initiative, and puts a blight on the human spirit. Brussels seems less interesting, less alive, than it did even during the war, I really think, now that the cancer of Statism has fastened on its life.

9 October – I stand in awe of the feats of memory performed by actors, so much so that my hat is instinctively off to the humblest member of the profession. One probably is over-impressed by proficiency in something that one can not do oneself, but I believe an actor’s proficiency impresses me more than any other, because while I am more or less accustomed to deal with words, as he does, I could never deal with them in that way. I could no more learn a part and carry it through a dialogue than I could fly; yet in straightforward memorizing of either prose or poetry, I am quite fairly good.

10 October – The British Government is still out in the old garb of professional righteousness that it always assumes when it is out to satisfy some economic interest. Its perfervid devotion to the League of Nations and the sanctity of covenants is just now peculiarly disgusting and peculiarly brazen, because only so short a time ago this policy earned for every Englishman the reputation of a common liar, the world over. Talking with a grumpy Englishman today made me wonder how many of his countrymen actually swallow the nauseous stuff that the Foreign Office ladles out. He said he had not read a word about the Ethiopian imbroglio, because he was “fed up with all that kind of thing twenty years ago, when we had what they called a Bureau of Propaganda, with a

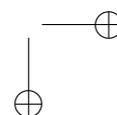
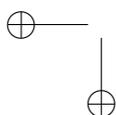


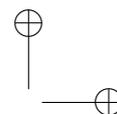
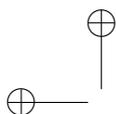


man at the head of it who would pay money for any dam' lie that anybody would tell him; and the bigger the lie, the more he'd pay." I thought that sounded pretty good, yet I dare say the bulk of the people are as easily taken in as ever they were.

11 October – The pleasantest square in Brussels is the Nieuw Graanmarkt, especially on a late Sunday afternoon, when it is quite deserted. I have a greater sentimental attachment for the Place Rouppe, but can not say as much for it disinterestedly as for the deep shade and quiet of the Nieuw Graanmarkt. I notice that where the Scotch elms and horse chestnuts have died here and there, the city is replacing them with a type of maple that I do not quite recognize. This is a wise move, as the foliage of maples is much finer. Probably every one has known the experience of being suddenly and unexpectedly and quite unaccountably visited by a great sense of peace, of immeasurable contentment and well-being. The last time I had that experience – probably the last time I shall have it – was ten years ago, when one late afternoon I sat down outside a café on the little public square in the city of Luxembourg. I would give a great deal to recapture that sensation; I have come near it once or twice elsewhere, but not quite, and returning to the square in Luxembourg in other years, I did not meet it again. I tried to conjure it the other day in the Nieuw Graanmarkt, but it did not come.

12 October – I get a little impatient with hearing so many of our various follies and villainies glibly charged off against "the machine age." I feel like making the

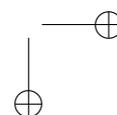
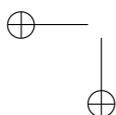


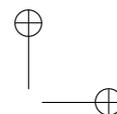
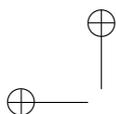


answer that Golden Rule Jones made when he was mayor of Toledo, to a man who wrote him for help, saying that whiskey had been his ruin. Jones replied, "I do not believe that whiskey has been your ruin. I believe it was the whiskey that you drank." I think we could do with a little inculcation of a sense of the individual, and of individual responsibility. I believe most of our troubles with the machine age are due to the machines that we misuse.

15 October – Why is it, I wonder, that taking up an unused streetcar track makes so much difference in the apparent width of the street? Is it that we carry over an impression from the time when it was in use, and when the volume of flexible traffic was narrowed by the inflexible traffic on the rails? I have just now looked at a street from which the rails are being removed, and can see that the clear sections seem considerably wider than the others.

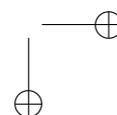
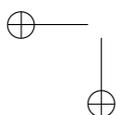
17 October – I think I have at last got the Anglo-Italian imbroglio to rights. England does not want the *status quo* in Africa upset or changed to Italy's advantage – that much is obvious enough, and the reasons for it are also obvious. In addition to this, my impression is that the war is being used for electioneering purposes. This may be, probably is, the primary motive. There is enough organized sentiment for the League of Nations in England to make a political capital worth pocketing for use in the forthcoming election. I suspect the design is to win the election and then begin rearming for the old job of policing Europe in England's interest, which England

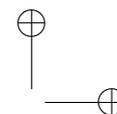
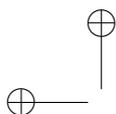




has done ever since Trafalgar. The job lapsed for a while after 1914, and my notion is that the old-line statesmen think England is now in shape to think about taking it on again. They may be right; it is a question of financial strength, and I have no idea how strong England is in this respect, but on the surface the enterprise looks a little precarious.

18 October – I have been talking with one of our highly placed departmental officials, who tells me that the general run of opinion in Washington is that war will spread to Europe shortly – that as soon as the election is over, if it goes right, the English will come down on Mussolini, full strength, and upset his apple cart. It may be, but I doubt it. My notion is that the Foreign Offices in Rome, Paris and London know exactly where they stand. The man also talked vaguely about the impending “German menace,” which seems pure nonsense to me; I can not imagine Germany’s going off half-cocked, and she is surely not in shape for what she would aim to do. Later, I have no doubt; but at present I would say that Hitler has everything to gain by being a model boy, and so far he has in fact been quiet as a mouse, and good as gold. According to this man, Washington believes that the country is dead against having anything to do with Europe – that Americans are isolationists to a man, and world without end. He said that if he wanted to start a sure-fire revolution in the United States, he would get the government committed to even the vaguest expression of interest in any European quarrel. Probably he is right about this, for our experiences have left a strong impression that our erstwhile noble allies are a lot of

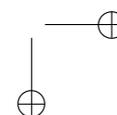
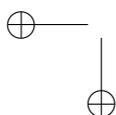


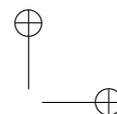
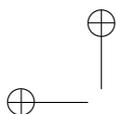


dead beats and swindlers. It will take a long time for that impression to wear off.

20 October – On the Boulevard Lemonnier I saw an advertisement of de Kuyper’s gin, “American taste.” They seem to be making two kinds now, and I understand they have a branch distillery somewhere in New Jersey. This interested me because some time ago I noticed that de Kuyper’s gin, which has been my stand-by in that line for years, did not taste right for some reason, and I switched to another, made by van der Valk, in Schiedam, a superb yellow gin, apparently as good as it ever was. They make a white gin also, named after the great mariner Piet Hein, but I do not like it so well as I did de Kuyper’s old-style white gin, or even Hulstkamp’s, which is very good. It is curious to see the lengths to which “American taste” is synonymous with bad taste. Almost anything advertised in Europe as “American taste” can be put down as a sophisticated product, sight unseen.

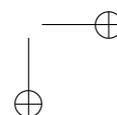
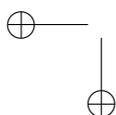
22 October – One dislikes to see the new enmities arising out of the present state of international relations. I am told that the Swiss children now take sides against German children, after the fashion of their elders. This is something brand-new; there was never any feeling against Germans until Hitlerism came in, but quite the opposite. The French farmers, whose hatreds are never difficult to stir up, are now down on their Belgian neighbours on account of nationalist economic competition. There is no cure for all this in the present order of things; only the prospect of further and further exacerbation.

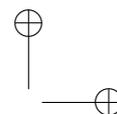
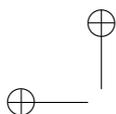




23 October – I saw reports lately of an astonishing thing that took place in England. A committee of high-grade scientificers watched a young Indian walk twice through a trench filled with fire. They examined his feet immediately afterward and found not a blister or an abrasion or any indication that would normally appear. This has given rise to a great deal of comment, most of it frankly puzzled. Garvin, in the *Observer*, says the most that can be made of it is that apparently mind sometimes works upon matter through channels which we have not yet explored. For my own part, I like to take it as backing up a belief I have long had, that God is a being of very delicate, refined and delightful humour. I can imagine that when we have got all our little certitudes down to a fine point, and have prescribed our limitations upon human capacities, and have measured the range of all operations of human faculties, God does something like this in a playful kindly way, just to show us where we get off. I have noticed that such incidents have a way of turning up about every fifteen or twenty years, at intervals just about long enough for human conceit and self-assurance to get their growth. We lay it down absolutely, for instance, that mind can not possibly operate upon matter in this, that or the other way. We are sure of it; nothing can be more certain. Then God digs up an East Indian from somewhere or other, puts him through his paces, and says, “There, I think that will probably hold those nincompoops for a while.”

26 October – Ruskin makes the fine observation that all travel becomes dull in exact proportion to its rapidity. Train travel, he says most truly, is no travel at all, but





merely transportation; one might as well get oneself done up and go as a parcel. One thinks of this when one sees what goes by the name of European travel. Also when one sees the amount of “organized amusement” got up nowadays on shipboard, one reflects on the apparent utter resourcelessness of the travelling public. Steamship companies keep girls now, to get up games and dances, introduce everybody to everybody all round, and see to it that no one is in danger of a moment’s solitude. The smell of the herd must be most delicious to those who have a nose for it, when so much pains and expense are lavished on keeping it at its rankest.

27 October – A few words with an American opera singer, said to be passably good in her parts. It set me wondering why interpreters of music are often of a low and vulgar type, while the creative artists – composers – are often the reverse. I can think of but few composers who were not an extremely decent sort, many of them very fine and high-minded, but most of the interpreters I have known were of another order entirely. This woman I speak of. . .

Here the MS breaks off.

