

THE CONGRESSIONAL FRONT
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THE HORSE AND BUGGY DAYS.

The horse and buggy days were not so buggy after all. We just think they were. Rummage the shelves of the U.S. Patent Office and you'll find that while this generation may have learned how to be prosperous though broke, it was not so ultra-smart after all. For instance, the zipper fastener was recognized as a patentable item back in 1893 when Cleveland was the President. We hail the principle of streamlined motorcars and locomotives as something new. Fact is that the original streamlining patent was issued to a chap in Mass. in 1865 when Lincoln was in the White House. Insulating with rock wool dates back to 1881. Safety glass which seems an indispensable part of motorcars today was patented 33 years ago and the present process of producing it differs little from the original patent. Artificial silk, which is about to be placed upon the American market in a big way goes back to 1886. Every family has an synchronized electric clock today. They were in use as early as 1895 in Germany. Here then is proof that the inventors knew their stuff even in horse and buggy days.

THE NATIONAL DEBT PASSES FORTY BILLION.

Life begins at 40 or was it 40,000,000,000. If so then our national life began on April 1st. (That particular day was not selected for the purpose. It just happened that way.) The national debt crossed the Forty Billion mark. It means a debt of \$307 for every man, woman and child in the United States. Thirty three years ago, in 1916, the debt was 971 million. Twenty years ago in 1919, it was 25½ billion as a result of war expenditures. Ten years ago, in 1929 it was 16 2/3 billions. Today it is 40 billion and will be nearly 45 billion by the end of June 1939 when Uncle Sam closes the books for the fiscal year. Interest payable on the national debt for the fiscal year 1940 will be well over 1 billion. There's something to ponder. Wonder if the chap who coined the slogan Forward To Forty could have meant Forward To a Forty Billion Debt.

CONSTITUTION BROUGHT UP TO DATE

It is truly interesting to see how the Constitution, now more than 150 years old, is brushed off, refreshed, re-interpreted, re-clarified day after day, month after month, and year after year by the Supreme Court. The State of New Jersey enacted a law known as the "Gangster Act." In a general way, it provides that if any person known to be a member of a "gang" consisting of two or more persons who has heretofore been convicted of a crime, he may be sent to prison for 20 years. Under this law, three persons who were alleged to be members of a gang in Philadelphia and who had been previously convicted of crime in Pennsylvania, were siezed while vacationing in New Jersey in 1936, tried and sentenced to prison. The case came before the Supreme Court and was decided last week. The Court was unanimous in holding the New Jersey law unconstitutional on the ground that "the terms it employs to indicate what it purports to denounce, are so vague, indefinite and uncertain that it must be condemned as repugnant to the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment(to the Constitution.) The old document known as the Constitution may seem musty to some folks but it's still fresh in safeguarding the lives, the liberties, and the property of the citizens.

WOULD FASCIST EFFICIENCY SOLVE UNEMPLOYMENT

As Congress seeks to deal with unemployment, observations are casually made that in the dictatorship nations, a superior kind of technique and efficiency has solved the unemployment problem. Based on best available information, this is true only if military employment is counted as employment. If the U.S. in proportion to its size compared with Germany operated as large a military establishment as Germany, there would be 11,000,000 persons engaged in producing munitions and war supplies. We would have a standing army of 1,500,000 (present size of our army is 183,477), a Reserve force of 6,300,000 (present size of National Guard and Reserve Officers is 300,302) and an air force of 500,000, (our air force personnel is included in the above figures for the army.) In dealing with unemployment figures in this country, army service and military employment in government plants is excluded. Hence, statistics on employment in other countries are of little value for comparison purposes unless allowances are first made for types of employment. The other factor to be considered is taxes. To maintain a military establishment comparable to that of dictator nations would require about 30 to 40% of the national income. How many persons would be willing to pay that kind of a bill for military purposes?

VOODOO VERSUS FOOD AND DRUG ACT.

In the nation's capital is an Indian Herb and Medicine Store where for a price, folks may obtain roots, herbs, concoctions, potions and medicines for all purposes. Here one may obtain philtres, and substances to bring luck, bring love, bring health (or so they say.) These supposedly all-powerful items bear high sounding names. Here one finds Pow Wow Blest Holy Oil or Devils Shoe String. Here is the Lucky Conqueror Root or the Lucky Money Root. Here one obtains Psychological Perfume or Helping Hand Incense Powder. The place does a thriving business. Not the least of it's business is done by mail order. These things commend themselves to gullible folks who believe that the way to win a law suit is to write the names of the twelve apostles on twelve sage leaves, place them in the shoes and then walk into a court room. But these high sounding names and the fanciful claims made in behalf of such roots, herbs and what not are not very persuasive on the Food and Drug Administration which administers the Food, Drug & Cosmetics Act. In fact, the officials who look after the purity and proper labelling of food, drugs and cosmetics are hard-headed realists who believe in enforcing the law. Hence, the lucky roots, blessed oils, and what not which still go out to the public contain one word on the package that somehow destroys the faith of seller and purchaser. That word is "alleged." Most of the containers state that these roots and herbs have "alleged" qualities for healing, curing and bringing health and thus we have another example of how hard headed science puts the brand on superstition.