

EDITORIALS

Goodbye, Mr. Hilton

James Hilton, writer of novels and screenplays, died last week in a Long Beach hospital. Born in Leigh, England, in 1900, he was known the world over for his "Lost Horizon," an imaginative and beautifully written tale of a mythical never-never land in the high mists somewhere beyond the Himalay mountains which he called "Shangri-La." His was the rare distinction of adding a new name to our language, for "Shangri-La" came to mean any distant Utopia, unattainable but ever sought after.

In the bitter days of 1942, President Roosevelt gave immortality to the name when he facetiously told newsmen that the Doolittle air raiders took off to bomb Tokyo from a base in Shangri-La.

Hilton achieved fame by his touching novel, "Goodbye, Mr. Chips," a whimsical and subtly humorous story of an English schoolmaster. Chips was unforgettable portrayed on the screen by actor Robert Donat.

Although closely identified with Hollywood, Hilton preferred to live for the last 10 years in Long Beach.

All the world mourns the passing of Jimmy Hilton. He took the raw materials of human emotion and with the deft touch of a great artist shaped it into creations of lasting beauty.

Now he has gone to his own Shangri-La. May he find there everlasting peace and happiness.

Goodbye, Mr. Hilton.

Those Days Are Gone

Most newspaper editors have long since learned that nothing is to be gained by arguing with heated words and bad temper. Name-calling is a sorry substitute for reason. A writer can never convince an opponent or influence public opinion by applying personal abuse to those with whom he disagrees.

An editor is often impressed by the tendency to throw sticks and stones when he reads letters sent in by readers for publication in the "letters" column. Ever mindful of the libel laws, he exercises his editorial privilege by deleting expressions that overstep the bounds of decency. All too frequently the letter writer is obsessed with the infallibility of his own opinions and immediately brands as a scoundrel anyone who fails to share his views.

It is a throwback to the days of caveman journalism when editors forgot that they were gentlemen. Even the illustrious Horace Greeley once called his colleague, James Gordon Bennett, a "low mouthed, blatant witless scoundrel." It is said that a Texas newspaper used to keep two "spare editors" on call, in case the incumbent got shotgunned for his abusive language.

Those days are gone forever. And, it is just as well.

A Good Year

Nineteen Hundred and fifty-four has been a good year in Torrance. The year which will end tomorrow has seen the city top all previously dreamed-of new construction marks, and it has brought the strings of commercial development which is long overdue.

The year which will get under way here in just a few hours holds more in store for the city than did the one about to die.

High on the list of things to come is the impending commercial development of the airport property lying east of Crenshaw Blvd. at Pacific Coast Hwy. Great things are being planned for that area and for other Torrance areas.

Building Superintendent John Russell says he can see no slackening of development in Torrance in the coming year. Already enough plans have been submitted to the city's building department to start the new year off with a \$3 or \$4 million construction permit total.

Great steps have been taken to solve the parking situation in the downtown business section—and more advances on the war for space are being planned for the coming year.

All in all, 1954 was good, but 1955 should leave it in a trail of dust.

LAW IN ACTION

THE YELLOW LIGHT

In less than two generations, the California motorist has learned how to get along with red and green lights, but not yellow ones. You stop at a red light unless you are driving a fire truck, a police car, or an ambulance. You start at a green light, or the impatient driver behind you will honk at you. The meaning of red and green lights is quite clear to most motorists.

But what do you do when the signal shows yellow? Do you stop on it and race across the intersection? Or do you bear down on the brake and stop?

Whatever you do, try to stop if you can do so safely. The yellow light gives you time enough to clear the intersection if you are already in it.

That's the reason for the yellow light.

If you are walking, don't start across the street on a yellow signal.

A flashing yellow light is a warning. Be careful, you are coming to a danger spot. It may be a busy intersection, a pedestrian crossing, or a curve in the road.

You hear much talk about the pedestrian's right of way—or the motorist's. But note, no one has the right of way when his use of it is likely to cause an accident. Nor does having the right of way get you out of a hospital bed any sooner.

NOTE: The State Bar of California offers this column for your information so that you may know more about how to act under our laws.

Kinda Hate T' See Y' Go



OF ALL THINGS

By Robert B. Martin

I guess the happiest, warmest feeling a youngster can ever have comes with the arrival of dawn on Christmas Day when he races madly into the living room to lay eyes on a flickering stock over the fireplace, the tinsel tree . . . and the gifts that Santa Claus has given him.

But is it right to tell him the yarn about Santa? Is it really cricket to tell a child a fairy tale . . . a fable you know will burst around him someday . . . something that will shock him and make him wonder why you have, with premeditation and cunning, set up a lie for him?

I'd say it's the most wonderful lie you can ever tell a child.

It's wonderful because it becomes a part of the childhood that will always belong to him. In future years when he discovers the fallacies of the world, the frailties of human nature, the Santa myth will return to him again and again. He will recall it with a smile and a faraway look in his eyes . . . it was the happy world of sugar-coated cookies and candy canes, lollipops and the feeling that his desires would materialize out of thin air . . . all because of Santa.

Christmas is the time for children . . . and we must never forget. The child who started it all . . . the reason for the giving of gifts, the reason for this welling of happiness and generosity over all the world . . . the birth of the little Lord Jesus—1954 years ago.

During my tender years, Ma never let me forget this . . . the real reason for Christmas. And at the same time, I was led to believe that Santa was the emissary of happiness, the mysterious, white-bearded old man who made toys for kids deep 'way up at the North Pole.

By the time I discovered that Santa was 'little more than the wild imaginings of my parents, I was all set to discard my short pants for knickerbockers . . . and I think I was sort of looking for a challenge in life . . . really, it was something like an emancipation. When I found that Santa was no one at all, that my parents had rigged the whole deal, maybe I slunked with relief . . . because I knew that I could never cope with Santa . . . but I certainly knew how to run my parents!

I was the type of a kid who waited up to catch Santa making his landing, sleigh, reindeer and all. I wasn't satisfied with trotting downstairs to the living room and just picking up my gifts. I wanted to see the old boy and talk with him. In those dear old days, I didn't know it, but Frodo Baggins was on Aslag from people's drinking rotgut, and making the stuff in bathtubs, there were other things going on . . . like gang warfare. We lived on 6th St. in Brooklyn, just behind Police

Commissioner Valerine. To some people, the racketeers, it was the funniest thing in the world to catch a rival, pump a slug into his head, and dump the body onto the Commissioner's front porch.

Well, one Christmas Eve, little Bobbie Martin was waiting up to catch Santa red-handed. I'd made special pains to be a good boy all year long, so I knew it was a cinch that Santa would visit 1625 69th St. waited and waited.

Ma nearly talked herself into a nervous breakdown, but I wasn't about to doze off. Pop fancied the idea of riding a sleigh off the roof and waving as he went by. It would have been quite a sight.

Then it happened . . . the screech of brakes, the thud and bumping roll of a body down the steps of Commissioner Valerine's house . . . but wait . . . the very much alive "body" rolled to one side and began running down the alley that connected Valerine's house with that owned by the Martins!

Hearing the footsteps, I ran to the window fully expecting to see Santa Claus in all his glory. "Santa," I yelled. "Santa, I'm up here!"

Two shots and the man sprawled in agony below my window. "Santa! Santa!" I cried. Two figures slipped out of the gloom behind the man. They looked up, then ran away.

Quite an experience for a small boy . . . seeing a man he believed to be Santa gunned in an alley. I ran downstairs to the Christmas tree and sat on a hassock. There were no presents under the tree. Just the rug.

Ma tried everything to get me back upstairs, but I wouldn't go. All the explaining in the world couldn't convince me that the man wasn't Santa.

Well, I finally did go back to my room . . . and there, right in the center of my pillow, was a big red lollipop! Santa had been there . . . he'd been in my room, I thought. I was sitting up in bed with the lollipop in my mouth when Ma came by to see how I was doing.

I told her Santa had left it on my pillow. She laughed . . . she told me that nobody had put it on my pillow, that I must have found it somewhere else. All I did, I said, was find that lollipop on my pillow. Before I settled down, Ma gave me some waxed paper to lay the lollipop on.

And when I woke up in the morning, it was still there. Presents of all kinds were under the tree and my stocking was filled with goodies.

I'm sure was fun having Christmas. Wedding bells are ringing for most of the girls in this area by the time they reach the age of 24. Men are 31, on the average.

Now don't go crediting some big shot with that incredible information . . . it took old Martin three months to delve through marriage records, patiently making a note of boy-girl ages in each case.

Why the wide difference in ages? Martin doesn't know. Maybe California girls mature faster than California men. Or they don't on the average, hook a man as quickly as they should.

Advertisement for 'DC-2 1/2!' featuring a photo of a man and text about a China National Aviation Corp. plane.

The SQUIRREL CAGE

By REID BUNDY

We had a list of New Year's resolutions drawn up for today, but decided to cancel them all out and subscribe hook, line, and sinker to the warning issued this week by the City News Service of Los Angeles in the form of an interview with Comic Pinky Lee. Here's the way it went:

Here's some sound advice from Pinky Lee to all citizens who are planning some form of revelry as a fitting tribute to the passing of the old year and the arrival of the new year:

"If you wear a goofy New Year's party hat, don't drive—if you drive, don't wear a goofy hat."

Pinky, who has parlayed a goofy hat, an appealing personality, and a lot of talent into a fortune, raises his voice in strident warning against the excessive use of funny hats at New Year's parties because "nothing so transforms a man's personality or robs him of his sense of responsibility like putting some outlandish hat on his head!"

"Whatever the psychology is, a man in a party hat is not in his right senses, which makes the jerk an even worse traffic menace than he would otherwise be," Pinky said.

"Like a guy I saw last year, who had worn several crazy hats too many the NBC-TV star continued. "He was standing up in his convertible and crying 'Yoleks! Yoleks!' and spurring his Cadillac on across a plowed field out in the valley. And he didn't quit riding to hounds, either, until his paper fox-hunter's cap blew off and he returned to sanity."

★ ★ ★

"Now you take a hostess who just indiscriminately passes out all sorts of hats to her guests, no telling what might happen. When the party breaks up and people start to go home, that's right when Napoleon starts marching his troops across the flower beds under the impression that they are the Alps and that the terrain are adobe-walls."

"Meanwhile, out in the street all traffic is brought to a halt because the normally mild-mannered bank clerk with the Indian feathercap has decided that it is time Sitting Bull sat awhile."

★ ★ ★

"That Roman gladiator in the tinsel-paper helmet is not helping things out any, either, with his insistence that if his wife will just be sensible and let him play chariot by standing on the back bumper and drive by means of rope reins, he will be glad to demonstrate some of the fanciest chariot racing on the neighborhood lawns since Ben Hur nosed out Marsala in the stretch!"

"If the hostess finally has to call the riot squad to break up the return grudge bout between two guests, she has only herself to blame—she should have known that any time you give a normal man a paper beret and let him put it on his head, he's going to decide that Pierre, the artist from ze Left Bank, is obligated to go around chucking ze ma'n'selles under ze chin and plucking zem and zat ze husband of one of zem will—ooh, la la!"

★ ★ ★

You've never seen turnoff, Pinky insists, until you've tried to back your car out of a driveway where simultaneously Washington is trying to cross the Delaware, Teddy Roosevelt is charging San Juan Hill, a Northwestern Mountie is trying to get his man, and Captain Kidd in a paper pirate's hat is insisting on walking the plank on your fender!

"Remember," Pinky said, "it's better to wear your own hat than to become a traffic statistic!"

★ ★ ★

Radio Fixer Gene DeBra has the answer for people who bring in radios and say, "I think it has a loose wire." He directs them to a box full of odd bits of wire and says, "There's a box of tight wires, pick out one that fits."

★ ★ ★

Bob Martin, who speaks "Of All Things" in the columns to the left, has decided that the two boppers who escaped from a prison dance band recently are "real gons" guys.

AFTER HOURS

By JOHN MORLEY

Special Note: These personal "sentence philosophies" under my copyrighted title, "I Believe," first began to appear in the Torrance magazine in 1937 and for the past 17 years in the press around the world. H. L. Mencken contracted for their use in his book, "A New Dictionary of Quotations," now published by Alfred A. Knopf, New York. They have also appeared under my name in the Saturday evening Post, Ladies' Home Journal (the latest, Page 155, October, 1954), and other national magazines. Also in my book, "I Believe," published originally in 1937 and revised after its 21st printing in 1947. A new edition of "I Believe" is scheduled for publication upon my return in September, 1955, from my coming trip around the world . . . John Morley.

I believe it is well to remember that all year we were so preoccupied with Left and Right, that we entirely overlooked there is an Above and Below.

I believe silence isn't always golden . . . sometimes it's plum yellow.

I believe a fool always finds a greater fool to admire him.

I believe a person is no older than his thoughts and acts . . . age-appraisals are the work of fiction-writers.

I believe the proper time to influence the character of a baby is nine months before it's born.

I believe you can preach a better sermon with your life than with your lips.

I believe a lot of trouble is caused by folks who stretch the cocktail hour too far.

I believe some men accept invitations to stag parties and then act disappointed when they don't see anything but the stags.

I believe nature has given woman so much power the law cannot afford to give her any more.

I believe at the age of 60, to marry a beautiful girl of 22, is to imitate those ignorant people who buy books to be read by their friends.

I believe worry always seems foolish to people with nothing to worry about.

I believe you can't fool all the people all the time . . . but you don't have to, so long as you can fool a majority.

I believe experience is what you get when you're looking for something else.

I believe some of the people who pay a fantastic bill with a smile at a night club will argue with the grocer over the price of empty coke bottles.

I believe the relative value of health and wealth usually depends on which you have lost.

I believe thrift becomes a wonderful virtue . . . especially in a deceased relative.

I believe a rich man is one who isn't afraid to ask the clerk to show him something cheaper.

I believe the fish, too, goes home and brags about the size of the bait he stold.

I believe a child is something.

times a pain in the neck when he's around . . . but often a pain in the heart when he's not.

I believe nasal crooners and torch singers will never change the standards by which good music is enjoyed.

I believe some folks will wait an hour in the weather for a movie seat and kick to heaven if they miss one revolution of a revolving door.

I believe when a man doesn't give a whoop about what people think, he has likely reached the top . . . or the bottom.

I believe diplomacy is the unsaid part of what you think.

I believe experience is the name some of us give to our mistakes.

I believe there is something radically wrong with a man or with a motor when they knock continuously.

I believe the hardest time to get the baby to sleep is when she's 18.

I believe you can best judge a man by his enemies than by his friends.

I believe distance is the best promoter of admiration.

I believe the old believe everything . . . the middle-aged suspect everything . . . the young know everything.

I believe the elderly people are fond of giving advice, to console themselves for not being able to give bad examples.

I believe adversity introduces a man to himself.

I believe a high-fashion person is usually in love with . . . himself.

I believe the defects of great men are the only consolation of the loafers.

I believe a coward thinks with his legs.

I believe a father is a banker appointed by nature and a husband a banker appointed by feminine society.

I believe, Utopia lies in the first letter.

I believe a person's heart at 50 is either broken or steeled.

I believe understanding is the best present you can give yourself . . . this Christmas.

I believe any man who expects without faith, without sweat, without criticism, without disappointment, to reach a worthwhile goal, is due for tragedy and defeat.

I believe life begins at 40 to tell us the best time is ahead to truly enjoy it.

I believe Christmas is a time to open the heart as well as the gift.

I believe Christmas will bring joy in the measure that we remember whose birthday it is that we are rejoicing.

(Copyrighted by John Morley. Reproduction without permission in whole or in part is prohibited.)

To our reader-friends throughout the world: "After Hours" is grateful for your good-will, your friendly commendations and any sincere constructive differences of opinion, which in the final analysis, all represents the only true yardstick of our right to exist as a column of news opinion. A happy 1955 to you and yours.

THE MAIL BOX

(The Torrance Herald welcomes expressions from its readers which can be published on this page. The editor reserves the right to edit the copy for publication. Letters should be kept brief and must be addressed to the Post Office, Torrance, California, under act of March 3, 1879.)

Cooperation Needed

Editor, Torrance Herald: My sincere thanks and appreciation to you for your page devoted to the church with your picture and write-up, "The State versus Paul M. . . ." (Monday, Dec. 27). It is one of the finest, and carries a real message.

Our churches in Torrance are doing a splendid job, but we do need the cooperation of parents, and of our city leaders.

FREEMAN A. BRUNSON  
Pastor, Church of the Nazarene

Driving Nitwits

Editor, Torrance Herald: I have some pet driving peeves.

When driving through an area where there are a series of lights set for 30 to 35 miles an hour, why is it that some nitwit always has to zoom down the street at 50.

He doesn't gain anything by speeding, because the other cars going the same way always catch up with him at the stop lights. As a result, they have to wait for him to start. If he would just take it easy, he would save his brakes, and those of the rest of us.

Another guy that gripes me is the chronic horn honker, who

beeps away the minute somebody gets in front of him.

If people would just relax a little, they'd get just as far, but maybe not quite as fast.

People are funny.

WALTER H. CRUMM

ESTABLISHED JAN. 1, 1914  
Torrance Herald

Published Semi-Weekly at Torrance, California, Thursday and Monday. Entered as second class matter Jan. 23, 1927. Post Office, Torrance, California, under act of March 3, 1879.

1619 Gramercy Ave.  
FA 4-4000

KING WILLIAMS, Publisher

GLENN W. PFELI, General Manager

REID L. BUNDY, Managing Editor

Adjudicated a legal Newspaper by Superior Court, Los Angeles County, Adjudicated Decree No. 21870, March 23, 1927.

MEMBER CALIFORNIA NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NATIONAL EDITORIAL ASSOCIATION

Subscription Rates: By Carrier, 30c a Month. Mail Subscriptions \$3.50 per Year. Circulation office FA144x 4-4004.