

Topics of The Times

SANCHEZ CERRO, slain He President of Peru, is reported to have left a personal estate of \$30. Poor. Possibly one should wait for confirmation of the story, but on the other hand cynics might do well to wait before dismissing the tale as absurd in the annals of Latin-American politics. As a matter of fact, the history of the southern republics is by no means devoid of patriotic rulers who gave no thought to private gain. Ex-President IRIGOYEN of Argentina left office recently in honorable poverty. The same thing was reported of President ALESSANDRI of Chile at the end of his first term several years ago.

SANCHEZ CERRO was so emphatically of the restless, fighting Foreign Legion temperament that it is easily imaginable he would give little time or thought to accumulating a bank account.

Readers who know **Stolen Old Masters** their crime fiction will not be puzzled by a question which must have arisen in many people's minds about the valuable paintings stolen from the Brooklyn Museum. What do the thieves expect to do with their loot? The pictures were always well known, and by now their description has been broadcast to the world. They obviously cannot be sold to any collector who has scruples about receiving stolen property.

Unfortunately, there are different connoisseurs. Readers who know their crook literature are perfectly familiar with them. These perverted collectors, half art lovers, half misers, will not hesitate to purchase the stolen million dollar Gainsborough or the two million dollar largest ruby in the world, the Eye of Ishtar, in order that they may sneak down in the dead of night to the cellar vaults and there gloat over their ill-gotten treasures in an ecstasy of possession.

The simpler explanation is that the criminals expect to dispose of their pictures after the public has forgotten the incident, or to buyers who may not have heard of the theft. Or perhaps they may hold them for ransom.

Election Fraud Punished. Two years in jail is the sentence imposed by Federal Judge KNOX on a quartet of bipartisan election inspectors. They conspired to make a false return of the poll in a downtown Manhattan district last November. It is the severest penalty ever imposed in this jurisdiction for an election fraud and was probably evoked by the brazen effrontery of the crime.

In the old days of ballot-box stuffing it was not always easy to identify a bunch of ballots as genuine or fraudulent. But in the present instance the inspectors coolly agreed to report different figures from those registered on the voting machine. They did not think it likely that the figures would be checked, and if somebody did, it would not come to anything, anyhow. A jury and judge in the Federal court have now decided that something should come out of it. The lesson will not be lost.

President on the Bridge. One reason why President ROOSEVELT is not likely to go to the London Economic Conference is that his presence will be needed every minute of the time here at home. This follows not only from so many grave problems which must be faced, but still more from the so-called Roosevelt technique in dealing with emergency problems. This demands that the President of the United States be on the job twenty-four hours a day.

Normally, a President's life grows easier when Congress adjourns. For good or ill the policies of the nation have been fixed by the lawmakers and the rest is good, honest administration. But the present Congress is not issuing mandatory instructions to the Chief Executive. It is loading him up with enormous discretionary powers. He is being given blanket authority to deal with a storm at sea. Ship captains do not leave the bridge in very heavy weather. They do with very little sleep.

Gauges to Watch. It will be for Mr. ROOSEVELT to decide any day in the time ahead whether to inflate, how much to inflate, when to stop inflating, when to deflate. The most ardent spokesmen for controlled inflation admit that inflation is a very skittish animal. To watch prices, to watch money markets, to watch the banks, to watch the farmer allotments, to watch the labor market, to watch a score of national speedometers, clocks and pressure gauges—to stand there peering out into the storm, ready to signal more speed, half speed, heave to, reverse—this is the job to which Mr. ROOSEVELT has dedicated himself for many months to come. Even a fortnight's absence from the country might be more than he would care to risk.

It is called inflation because people hold their breath and see what happens.

Cross-word puzzle: A five letter name that can't be written in again for Mayor of New York.

The British-Argentine treaty, it is feared in some quarters, will hurt our trade. Microscopes for ascertaining existence of our trade will be furnished on request.

Ex-Senator THOMAS of Colorado wants to be sent to jail as a gold hoarder. That's what hoarders always want, to be alone with their shining gold.