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Waterways Looking Better.  
Congressman Sears has proposed a drainage district to include in its boundaries the area between the Alleghenies and the Rockies, to be administered as a unit in applying federal development of waterways. Here is a really constructive proposal, not so much for the reason as set out, that the rivers of the interior have been neglected because of lack of political influence, as for the greater reason that other demands have seemed more urgent.

Constant harbors have been given the greater attention, because the coastwise shipping of the United States has been developed while the shipping on the river decayed. Before the war the coastwise commerce of the United States was fully equal to the overseas trade, and it was carried exclusively by American vessels. Such an important branch of the carrying trade could not be neglected, and, as the cry of "pork barrel" rose higher, the money set apart for river and harbor improvement dwindled, until there was scarcely enough available to care for the coastal harbors and nothing for the rivers.

Railroads have reaped a rich harvest because the rivers have not been improved, but even the railroad men now admit the need of the service that can be had from the great systems of which the Mississippi river is the main stem. Organizing a great drainage district, as is suggested by Congressman Sears, should have the effect of bringing to bear on the general topic the force of a systematically arranged program. Work on the rivers will no longer be piecemeal, but every step that is taken will be part of a well considered whole, the end of which will provide a co-ordinated service of river transportation.

The president favors this in his message. It is not to be brought about all at once, but little by little, until in the future the whole will have been achieved, and at no great cost to the country, cheap in fact when compared to its service. The Sears plan will aid in carrying out the Coolidge idea.

The Human Equation.  
The recent disaster on the New York Central rails renewed attention to the human equation in the railroad problem. Millions spent on safety devices and block signals, and men drilled for years in safety first, but despite all these devices the failure of the human equation at the critical time results in the death of many and the wounding of more. Automatic signals may be errorless, safety devices may work without fail, but men will go to sleep, will grow careless, will forget. The insensate machine may work perfectly, but the human machine is prone to fail at critical moments.

It would seem that the great railroads of the country have about reached the limit of safety appliances. But of what avail is a block signal if it is not seen, or if seen not obeyed? The American craze for speed, the almost insane desire to get elsewhere from somewhere in the shortest possible time, nine times out of ten without adequate reason, is more directly responsible for railroad accidents than any other one cause. It tests the human equation beyond the limit of human ability. In this particular disaster the engineer of the train that plowed into the rear of the train ahead was a man of more than a quarter century's experience.

In response to the insistent demand for more speed, and still more speed, he was compelled to run too fast and too close to the train ahead. When the section ahead was forced to stop there was no time to send a flagman back a sufficient distance with flag and fuzee, and a dense fog obscured the signals. The mechanical devices worked perfectly, but the human element failed when the test came. It will probably always be so. And the danger is intensified every day by a growing speed mania that must be satisfied, and without any particular reason save a growing desire to get from one place to another in the shortest possible time. Not because time is valuable, but because of a foolish desire to annihilate distance that does not mean a thing worth while when the desire is accomplished.

It would not be detrimental to business or pleasure if the American people calmed their nerves a little bit and suppressed their passion for senseless and often destructive speed. It is far better to take a little more time and get there all in one piece.

Billy Pinkerton is Dead.  
"The eye is closed" William A. Pinkerton has succumbed to the fate that waits for all of us, and sleeps with his father, the great Allan, who first gave to the name its terror for evildoers. "W. N. S." will still shine over the entrance to headquarters, but the guiding spirit of the service is gone. His disciples will carry on, for he trained men to work in the ways he found effective, and under his tutelage others have become adept in the finding out of the secret things men do and try to conceal.

William A. Pinkerton knew as many newspaper men as any circus advance agent that ever went over the road. He was always good for a story, not often the one the reporters most wanted to get, but one that was worth printing. Mr. Pinkerton also knew most of the bankers of the country, and nearly all of the worth-while criminals. He personally paid very little attention to the small fry of the underworld, but he was intensely interested in the big boys. These got from him a high tribute; and in this characteristic of the man his friends found much to admire, for he practiced it steadily, and used it as a guiding principle in the carrying on of his great business. Many a former criminal, as well as many who are not reformed, will feel sorry when they learn of the death of the man who befriended them as often as he pursued them.

DEBTS AND NATIONAL HONOR.  
Coming along with the announcement that the United States will permit American experts to sit in on the economic inquiry that is to be made into German affairs is the equally important news that Secretary Mellon intends to urge that France make some gesture in the direction of paying the debt it owes the United States. This has been one of the little issues that has cropped up in the popular mind every time a new turn on the screw has been made by the French in their occupancy of the Ruhr.

President Coolidge explicitly explains that the presence of the American experts on the inquiry commission will be entirely unofficial. Their action does not bind the United States government to any course of action. What is sought, however, and earnestly, is some way whereby German conditions can be stabilized. The restoration of industry and commerce, the ordinary life of the nation, demands that some steps be taken, first, to find out exactly what conditions are, and then to determine the nature of the remedy and apply it until a cure has been effected. It is admitted that Germany can not recover without some outside help; the disposition of the German people to help themselves will be admitted, even if the way they take does not meet the approval of everybody. But they will not recover until some of the bonds that now hold them back are released.

As to the French debt, it should be kept in mind always that it has no relation whatever to the situation in Germany. Money was loaned to the republic of France, by the United States, not on the uncertain security of any prospect France might have of collecting indemnity from Germany, but on the security of the honor of France. We should not lose sight of this pertinent fact, nor do we believe that France has forgotten it. Poincare, shrewd and energetic politician, has kept to the foreground the implication that America's bill would necessarily have to await any settlement that might be made with Germany.

On the other hand, the government at Washington has steadily held to the opposite view. No matter what the adjustment between France and Germany may be, our claim is just, is past due, and it is highly desirable that some attention be paid to it at Paris. Terms that were acceptable to England are offered all who are indebted to this country, and a movement in the direction of settlement might not be disapproved by any. There never was any support here for the proposal that all debts be proportionately scaled, or that any be forgiven. Payment of these enormous sums of money may not forever prevent war, but the course proposed will certainly tend to postpone conflict, for no nation can fight long without money, and a bankrupt has difficulty in getting means wherewith to carry on profligacy.

Several hundred students of a Michigan high school went out on strike because one of their number had been suspended. According to the press reports they finally "consented" to resume their studies pending arbitration. It is to be hoped that the arbitration board took the shape of a well applied bed-slat.

Charges that the Grand Island football players were pepped up by hooch to win a game may remind some of the old timers of the remark Lincoln said to have dropped when told that Grant drank whisky.

"One Hundred Liquor Cases" was a headline calculated to arouse great interest until a reading of the article below disclosed that they were not cases of liquor.

There are no more slips twixt the cup and the lip than there are between recommendations for economy in public expenditures and actual economy therein.

Pains from the French academy have been awarded three French clowns. But, then, they haven't as many politicians in France as we have here.

Presumably the next time "my dear Buff" throws an affinity's letters into the furnace he will be mighty careful to see that there is a good fire going.

Over in England they throw bricks at candidates. Then English men and women come over here and throw rocks at us, first making us pay for the rocks.

Frank W. Stearnes is the personal manager of the Coolidge campaign. But it will not be that kind of a chase for the nomination.

Governor Bryan complains that he lacks power. Now who's thunder has been monkeying with the gubernatorial aerodynamics?

It is easy enough to understand why Europeans are eager to get to America, after one reviews what is going on over there.

Horrible suspicion. Is the Klan backed by cotton manufacturers hopeful of an increased demand for nightgown materials?

There are eight women in the British house of commons. Of course there is no gag rule in the house of commons.

A Chicago opera singer fainted from effects of her zeal. Usually it is the audience that needs relief.

No Nobel peace prize this year, and just look what they are doing down in Mexico!

Homespun Verse  
—By Omaha's Own Poet—  
Robert Worthington Davis  
MORE LAWS ARE NEEDLESS.  
We do not need more laws to cure the ills that often show  
Because there are too few to form these laws who really know  
The hardships they will bring to them who ever forward go.  
And time will come when legislation shall the laws revise,  
And now and then repeal an act the people all despise,  
Which has been passed by men who had no vision in their eyes.  
And let us not too quickly force impulses into aught,  
But wait until the subject has been wisely gleaned by thought—  
Unless we'll go—as we have gone—regretting measures wrought.  
And let us not confuse statement with others seeking fame  
Upon the strength of politics, devoid of nobler aim—  
Unless we wish to come at length to misery and shame.

"From State and Nation"  
—Editorials from Other Newspapers—

Better Pastures.  
From the Salt Lake Tribune:  
A committee appointed by the American Society of Agronomy is seeking practical means for the conservation and improvement of the pastures which feed more than half of the cattle and other farm animals of the country. Two-thirds of the cultivated area in crops in the United States is devoted to the production of feed for livestock, the proportion varying in different sections from 91 per cent in New England to 51 per cent in the west south central states. It appears that the permanent improvement of one year would feed about 50,000,000 adult cattle or their equivalent, and since there are more than twice that number in the country, it follows that over one-half of the feed now furnished by pasturage. It is estimated that pasturage costs only about one-fourth as much as harvested crops.

The neglect of these pastures and the abuse of natural resources is a disgrace to American agriculture," the committee reports. "Only the fact grass will stand an almost incredible improvement has prevented its utter destruction. Relegated to land too rough to till, neglected by the farmer, abused by the grazier, ignored by the investigator, the permanent pastures furnish at least one-third of the feed consumed by domestic animals. 'Better pastures' should become the slogan of American agricultural progress."

Some seven and a half million individuals or corporations will be affected by the proposed reduction. Of these more than seven million are incomes ranging from one to twenty-five thousand annually, with the smaller incomes in the great majority. The single man or woman with an income of \$2,000 who today pays \$40 in federal income tax would, under the Mellon plan, pay \$22.50. The man with an income of \$5,000 would pay \$90, instead of \$160. Incomes of \$8,000 would pay \$225, instead of \$420. And so on through the list. Heads of families would pay less than the single man or woman with an income of \$2,000 who today pays \$40 in federal income tax would, under the Mellon plan, pay \$22.50. The man with an income of \$5,000 would pay \$90, instead of \$160. Incomes of \$8,000 would pay \$225, instead of \$420. And so on through the list. 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