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THE PENALTY OF SPEED.

The New York Central wreck, resulting in the death of twenty-two people, brings the list of fatalities in serious wrecks since January 1 to considerably more than 200. Some of them have been due to the failure of human agencies to enforce the black signal safety appliance, but this last disaster was one which may partially be charged up to the American public.

The train that was wrecked, was running at a rate of about seventy miles an hour when derailed. The cause of the accident is a matter of speculation. The coroner thinks a rail spread. The speed of the train turned the cars over and many were injured, aside from those killed.

Americans constantly demand greater risk in railway service, because they constantly demand greater speed. As a nation we seem to be willing to take chances on our lives for the sake of rushing through with things. The fatal train was running at seventy miles an hour. It was filled with people who delight to ride at that furious pace. That the public demands faster and faster service is shown by the patronage given to fast trains as compared with slower ones. There's an incentive, therefore, for locomotive builders to make machines that will run along faster and faster, drawing coaches behind.

As a nation we're looking for chances to break records in time. And the penalty for speed comes high.

The waving of red flags in Chicago, fiery speeches against capital, and all that sort of thing, is a continuation of the spirit which prompted a man not long ago to drop a bomb in a Philadelphia bank. It's a dangerous sign, and one that ought to attract the attention of serious minded people everywhere. The fact that there are in the country and in the race members of society whose minds lead them to destroy by preference, is a serious indication in itself. And, knowing of this condition, it becomes the duty of intelligence to quiet rather than arouse to excitement such as these. Utterances of drastic and iconoclastic type fall as seeds upon these anarchistic minds grow up into full-sized bombshells in a very short time.

THAT GRIDIRON DINNER.

Wonder has been expressed by part of the general public over the fact that the snappy portion of the Gridiron dinner proceedings, which took place some weeks ago at Washington, was printed by many of the weekly magazines of the country and by some of the daily papers, but not by all of them. The wonder comes through the fact that the matter emanating from the Gridiron club banquet was of a sensational nature and carried a large news value. But it is a matter easily explained.

The Gridiron club at Washington is an organization of newspaper correspondents. Not all newspaper correspondents at Washington are members, but many of them are. They hold an annual banquet about the first of each year, at which they drop their noses for news and enjoy themselves in their private capacities. They put on the grill all of the prominent men in the national capital, and have much sport in the pastime. They generally invite the big men whom they expect to grill. But there is an unwritten law that what goes on in the Gridiron club is of a confidential nature and that any public man may say anything he chooses without having a word of it get into print. The fact that it is the Gridiron club is a protection for his utterances, and some sly utterances result.

At the last meeting of the club, President Roosevelt and Senator Foraker were invited guests. There was a prominent cartoonist present, who drew splendid likenesses of various men as their names were hinted at. Thus, when it was asked, "Who loves Roosevelt most?" the cartoonist pictured Roosevelt. And on the other hand, when it was asked who loved Foraker most, Roosevelt's face loomed up on the sketch artist's paper.

That much was given to the public on the Sunday morning after the dinner of Saturday night. And not much more. But as a matter of fact there were a couple of pretty warm speeches made by the president and Senator Foraker.

Some reports say that Foraker spoke first, others say that Roosevelt spoke first. In stories which say that Foraker led off, it is said that he declared, in the course of his speech, that nobody had loved Roosevelt more than he. The president is said to have answered, insinuating some rather uncomplimentary things at the Ohio senator. Then Foraker, angered, arose and, with white face, made the speech

of his life, grilling the president roundly for destroying confidence in business conditions and tearing down industrial prosperity, sending out spies to make criminals of cattle men, etc. The president, whose face twitched with excitement under this attack, arose and made what is said to have been the speech of his life, also, in which he went after Foraker with equal jabs. It is said that things became so tense that some of the more timid guests even wanted to go home.

Members of the club, who were present, heard the speeches and, although they knew the news value of the story, they kept faith and sent out nothing concerning the speeches. That was Saturday night. But Monday afternoon from some source, somehow, the story shot out from Washington over telegraph wires. Then the Associated Press carried a very short account of things in order to contradict some features of the first report.

And that is why papers carrying Associated Press reports, or who had correspondents in Washington who belonged to the Gridiron club, did not give the meat of this story to their readers. The story was not one for the public. It was like a meeting with in the halls of a secret fraternal order. Where the story did come from, nobody knows. It is not probable that a man present at the dinner sent it. It is more likely that some outsider heard a discussion and, not belonging to the club, seized upon the possibilities and used them for his paper.

In some ways the report was a deplorable matter. It has destroyed the secrecy of the Gridiron dinners. A year ago one of the president's most famous speeches was but a duplicate of what he had delivered at the Gridiron dinner. This was his speech in regard to "Muckrakers." No word of it got to the public until some time after the banquet, when the president chose to deliver it again.

CALIFORNIA'S RECENT THREAT.

San Francisco has surrendered her desire to exclude Japanese from the public schools, on condition that the Japanese coolies, who come to this country to interfere with American labor, be excluded from the country. The conflict between the federal government and the state of California, over the admittance of children to the San Francisco schools, is rendered useless in light of the existing conditions, but because of the dispute over the point, it would seem probable that the case begun by the United States government to force the city of San Francisco to admit the Jap student, ought to be carried on and determined finally in the United States supreme court.

The question as to whether the federal treaty takes precedence over and annuls the law of the state is still undetermined, but it is one which may arise again at any time. For that reason the opinion of the United States supreme court upon this point is very much desired just now.

Now that San Francisco has lost sympathy in its fight by admitting that the school question and the state's right question, over which so much frenzy was created and regarding which so many hearts were set beating for the rights of the parents who were alarmed lest their children be sent to school with the yellows, were not at the root of the teapot tempest at all, but that it was the labor problem at the foundation, there will be a reaction in favor of a more centralized federal control of all things. It has been brought out clearly in this whirlwind that there must be a final authority somewhere, and that it would be with the federal government, where it will operate to the advantage of the whole nation, than with various states, allowing each community to set itself up into a supreme government and to pass laws that will lock horns with those of the national government.

It is the same old question which stirred our forefathers into ringing speeches and debates when the constitution was framed. It is the same old question that rose up and sent half of this country at fighting the other half, forty-odd years ago. And it is a question which will be settled one day by concentrating more authority with the federal government, at state government's expense.

When this San Francisco school controversy arose, California sent eloquent telegrams to eastern newspapers threatening to secede before they would surrender their God-given right to send their children to white schools, and to keep them separated from oriental companions. It was pointed out that California was a powerful commonwealth, a wealthy state, and a proud community. It was argued that Californians were a peculiarly independent people, fearing no man, and that for the sake of their little children's rights they would go to war, if need be, with the balance of this union. The outcome has demonstrated that all of this impassioned outcry was not for the children's schooling, but was based upon the competitive labor that comes into the Golden Gate from the orient.

But for all of that, the memory of the California threat is still ringing in

the ears of this country, and because of this memory there is a desire that the constitutional problem of supremacy in federal treaty or state law, be settled once for all.

Back in the early days of our history, Alexander Hamilton stood for federal power. He argued that all of the authority should rest in the federal government excepting that which was expressly delegated to the states. His colleagues were afraid of the theory and argued that all power should rest with states, excepting that expressly delegated to the federal government; that local government, and just as little of it as possible, was the ideal. And Hamilton's theory is coming more and more to impress the people of the country that he helped to found.

In the early days there was no central government, and states fought it. Each state made its own tariff laws, and thus there became inequality in ports and a rivalry going after business which resulted in the cutting of rates until an injury was worked upon the whole country. And then the states formed a combination—a trust for governmental purposes, so to speak. They went together, each sacrificing a little individually for the sake of the whole, and the nation became recognized by foreign countries. It was the centralized power that earned this recognition. It is as the confidence of a foreign nation in the fact that a contract or treaty made with the central government in the United States would be observed and carried out by all of the states in the union, even though it worked more or less hardship upon a few, for the sake of the whole.

It's not a new problem, but an old one, that we're up against today. It's the same old problem that the constitution-builders fought over. And today, when various state legislatures are making various sorts of unequal laws to meet the same difficulties, resulting in unfair results to the whole union and to the citizens and industries of the whole union, incidents of the San Francisco sort only tend to emphasize the need of a simpler and more unified authority, invested in a central government to represent and act for the combined states.

RIDGEWAY'S FAILURE.

Colliers thinks that the failure of Ridgeway's weekly magazine has been a gross misfortune and points to the failure as proof that good things can fall as well as bad. Colliers looks at this failure through colored glasses. The failure has in it more the demonstration of the fact that the iconoclast has no permanent place in society, and that the destroyer and pessimistic agitator against evil, eventually dies. It is a striking example of the demand of the public in this country, and we're like the rest of humans, for optimistic things rather than constant battering away at the bad in the world.

Ridgeway's Militant was a weekly magazine started some months ago. It was to be a weekly, and was published simultaneously in fourteen cities of the United States. Its mission was to attack evil in all places, city and country, and to destroy sin. Ridgeway's had no time to the building up of good things, nor to devote to constructive effort. The public failed to buy Ridgeway's, and the magazine has announced its demise. In the announcement, Ridgeway says the printing machinery on which it was attempted to turn out the magazine were not perfect, and that the public would not stand for poorly printed publications. This is well enough for an excuse. It is not logical, because Ridgeway's was well printed. The trouble with Ridgeway's was that it was a "knocker." And the knocker finds an early grave, whether it be a national magazine or a humble citizen.

Perhaps it is well enough to let Ridgeway's state its own purpose in life. This is what it said: "Wherever the strong are oppressing the weak; wherever the thoughtless are grinding the helpless; wherever selfishness seeks that which is not its own; wherever right cries out for a champion; wherever plutocracy or hypocrisy is opposing democracy; wherever we can help along that better day—there you may expect to find Ridgeway's Militant. This is an honest, serious effort of ours to build up a fighting machine, not for political power, not for profit, but for the common good. Write to us or write to our editor in your section, or see him personally, about some growing wrong that should be attacked; some wrong in one of your city, county or other state institutions; the failure of some public official to do his duty; some glaring social evil; some one of the thousand crimes that men and women commit against society for the sake of gold. See what a fighting equipment your editor has for any campaign he may take up."

The mission sounds well. It is a promise that, at first glance, would appeal to many, because it is spectacular and because it savors of the spicy side of life; it promises lively reading of a certain sort for a certain time. There can be no question but that the editors in this effort were seriously bent on their mission to save the country. Neither can there be a doubt that

they were on the wrong track.

For a few short weeks the periodical "Militant," then it succumbed to a lack of patronage. That's the strongest sign that it was on the wrong track, for the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

There is no question but that there are gross evils existing in this land today. There can be no question but that evil always will exist. And there is no case on record where an agitating agent came forth as a reformer and saved the country. The man upon whose teachings is founded the christian religion, was an optimist. The prophets were filled with gloom and evil forebodings, but the greatest leader of them all saw the cheerful things ahead, looked for the good and not for the bad.

Running water purifies itself, and human generations do the same thing. Every evil act is a suicidal act. Given enough time, the evil things will destroy themselves. Corruption will become so corrupt that it will die a natural death. There are many instances where vice was allowed to go so far that its viciousness rose up at last and poisoned its very being. No man or set of men, and no magazine or set of magazines, can purge society by keeping before the public's gaze the vice and crime and evil doing of the out-cast type of beings.

And persistently holding up to the public gaze the worst features of life, has an effect wholly unsought by the reformer. Suggestion is a powerful agent. We're all more or less subject to the hypnotic influence of suggestions that come from the magnetic men about us. And to forever run on and on about the vicious things, the evils, the corruption, by and by produces the belief in humankind that all things are bad, that all people are tainted with crime and vice and selfishness—and that thought breeds evil-germs.

To constantly keep in public mind, by agitation, the bad that is around us, makes more bad people and does not reform those who are attacked. An attack antagonizes and forever surrenders the possibility of changing the ways of the man who is the target.

The iconoclast is almost as vicious a member of society as the ignorant criminal, and his destruction may be greater. Anybody can tear down, but to build up is much more a noble business. And the trouble is that one pessimist, one iconoclast one agitator, pointing his finger at the dark corners and seeking out the wrong and evil, can himself destroy more of wholesome spirit, more of hope, more of encouragement and optimism, than a score of builders can construct.

There is no permanent place in life for the knocker or the agitator. The founder of the christian religion built upon good deeds and charity and kindness toward the sinners as well as the good—and the effect has been a growing one. Ridgeway was in earnest, but Ridgeway was on the wrong track.

RAILWAY MEN TALK.

One result of the agitation against railroads that has been rife over the country, and which is coming to a head in various state legislatures through the medium of hundreds of bills that are being introduced antagonistic to those corporations, has been an increased tendency among railroad men to recognize the public as a vital factor to deal with, and to take considerably more care than ever before in presenting their side of the story to the people at large. Publicity, which has carried the public's cry from shore to shore, is now serving to carry the views of the railway men, many of whom had hitherto considered it unnecessary to talk for publication. It has been a clear-cut recognition of the importance of the public prints in the forming of public opinion under modern conditions.

During the past few weeks Mr. Hill and Mr. Harriman have consented to be interviewed as never before. In fact Mr. Hill has taken pains to send several long letters to the newspapers. Many others have also paid heed to the knocking at their doors, and have opened the doors in order to tell their side of the matter to the crowd outside. W. C. Brown, president of the New York Central, has spoken. Theodore F. Shonts has given his views. And Julius Kruttschnitt, director of maintenance and operation on the Hariman lines, has taken the unprecedented railroad attitude that complete details of all wrecks should be given maximum publicity as a means of preventing further disasters. Mr. Hill told us a few weeks ago that railway extension is badly needed; that the railroads of the country are utterly inadequate to the traffic; that the railroads of America, to keep pace with conditions, ought to build 5,000 miles of track and spend \$5,500,000,000 within the next five years—\$1,100,000,000 every year—for improvements. He pointed out that materials have gone up, wages have gone up, railway construction is more expensive than ever before, billions of dollars must be borrowed, and yet the public agitation is for a reduction of rates and railway income. It was pointed out that President Roosevelt has never at any time contemplated reducing rates, but that

his regulation theory is merely to prevent unjust discriminations. And Mr. Hill adds that instead of lower rates, higher rates must be charged by the railroads. A number of prominent railway officials have agreed with this statement.

And now Mr. Shonts has been prompted by the agitation in state legislatures, to express his views. He takes the stand that the railroads, to win the confidence and protection of the people, "must throw down their hands," make a frank statement of true conditions, and ask for help. This is what he says:

The attitude of the present national administration on the question of rates has not been to secure their reduction, but to prevent unjust discrimination. Railroad rates in the United States are lower than anywhere else in the world, while the service under normal conditions is better. I do not think that the public is demanding cheaper transportation so much as it is demanding safe, reliable and adequate transportation. In the matter of improvements the railroads of the country, almost without exception, have been pursuing a hand to mouth policy, which has proved costly to themselves and irritating to the public. Costly to themselves because before improvements necessary to relieve existing conditions have been completed their capacity has been exceeded by the growth of traffic; irritating to the public because at no time in recent years has the public been free from delays and annoyances of a continued state of congestion. The result is that the railroads are confronted also with a state of public opinion extremely hostile. So that the raising of money to provide facilities so urgently needed is, under present conditions, well nigh impossible, although many of the corporations have sought to do so at the risk of almost imperiling their credit. The situation is a grave one. If the various states continue arbitrarily to reduce rates, as some of them are doing, and the various laborers continue to press their demands for increased wages and shorter hours, the next unprecedented crop harvested in this country will be a record breaking crop of receiverships.

I wish to say, and with all possible emphasis, that in my judgment the time has come for fair dealing to both sides of this controversy. The time has come for what the president calls a "square deal," but we want it all around.

There is no doubt that in the building up of these properties things have been done which though legally right were morally wrong, but because they were legally right and cannot legally be disturbed, what is the use of exploiting the new when no result can be secured except to furnish material for the charlatan and the demagogue and to intensify class bitterness?

If any government, whether national, state or municipal, permits any injustice to be done to corporations simply because they are corporations, the real sufferer is the small investor. Let us compromise on the best available and the most practicable terms. Let the railway managers lay aside all subterfuge and come out in the open. Let there be a maximum of publicity and a minimum of legislation. Let eminent financiers and "captains" of industry co-operate with the president to bring about better corporate practices. Let them lay their cards on the table and say to the president: "We will uphold your hands not only in enforcing existing laws, but in asking such others as are necessary to prevent wrong-doing, but you in return must protect us from the irresponsible agitator, whoever he may be. Let us convince the public that we will give it the best facilities American ingenuity can devise, and in my judgment the funds required will be forthcoming.

As to labor, treat it fairly and it will meet you half way. No sane citizen or employe desires hard times, and if they realize what our latest statistics prove absolutely, that the margin between prosperity and bankruptcy is not broader than a 10 per cent. increase in the cost of transportation and a 10 per cent. decrease in the revenue received, they will join the conservative forces of the country in seeing that no steps are taken for bringing on the crisis.

Mr. Shonts' plea is one much in line with the president's attitude—a plea for not only regulation of unjust discriminations by the government, but also a plea for protection under the federal government's wing. It is a recognition of the tendency toward federal centralization as against unequal state restrictions and laws, and an appeal for centralized protection as against unequal and sometimes drastic state legislation.

The letter of President Brown of the New York Central is much along the same line. As bringing out the point that many state legislatures have overstepped President Roosevelt's proposed regulations for justice and not malice, by seeking to reduce rather than to adjust the business, the following comment from the Kansas City Journal is significant:

The letter of Mr. W. C. Brown, vice president of the New York Central line, and for a number of years general manager of the Burlington system, is an able and far-seeing statement of the very probable effects of the anti-railroad campaign now being waged throughout the country. It represents the view of a man who has had the widest possible experience in the active and practical management of railroads and is not the dictated interview of an office magnate. It is neither an undignified complaint against what has been done nor a sensational appeal for leniency in the guise of sounding an alarm regarding what may be done in the future. It is a dispassionate and almost statesmanlike exposition of what will happen, according to the inescapable laws of business, if the rabid antipathy to corporations because they are corporations shall be reflected in legislation that goes beyond what has already been enacted. It is not the province of this sort of legislation to be merely punitive.

Whether the railroads have brought about this hostility or not does not affect their rights to demand equal and exact justice as well as their duty to give it themselves. The proper limit of anti-corporation legislation is in common fairness the correction of existing evils, not the wreaking of vengeance for possible injustice in the past. More strictly speaking, there should be no anti-corporation legislation any more than there should be pro-corporation legislation. There should be simply legislation that extends and guarantees right and justice to corporation and individual alike.

It is this broad view of the situation which Mr. Brown expresses in his letter. He concedes the justice of the legislation that has been enacted up to this point, but warns against the exhibition of malice in future laws, for vital injustice is only malice in legal guise. The increased cost of supplies, the tremendous demand for enlargement, the voluntary increase of \$75,000,000 per year in the wages of employes, the material curtailment of revenues in many ways, the increasing difficulty of raising money for improvements—all these are facts to be taken into consideration and any legislation which does not do so cannot escape the charge of being to that extent ex parte and retaliative. The whole situation is too impressive and too important for any feeling of satisfaction at the mere crippling of a corporation because it is such. There is often more danger in momentum than in impact and it is against the danger in the momentum which anti-corporation sentiment has acquired that Mr. Brown directs his warning.

AROUND TOWN.

How do you like to answer the telephone and hear: "Hello. Who is this?"

All's fair in a street carnival. It'll be street fair and horse fair together in Norfolk next summer.

Directors of the Commercial club show their loyalty to the interests of Norfolk in no way more strikingly than in getting down town at 8 a. m.

A Norfolk man who hurt his foot and wrapped it up in white bandages, says that if he doesn't get more sympathy he will have to wrap it up in black bandages.

A Norfolk woman telephoned to her husband the other day and said, "Won't you come home early this evening? We're going to have Sadie's lambs for supper."

And now Grand Island is worried for fear the sugar factory there will be dismantled and taken away. Norfolk can be thankful for one thing, at least—we have nothing of that kind to fear.

Teachers and bankers and race horses—they're all coming to Norfolk for a convention soon. The teachers come April 3, 4 and 5; the bankers April 22; and the racers July 31 and August 1 and 2.

Plainview News: Norfolk is gaining quite a reputation as a convention city. They treated the schoolma'ams so nice last year that they are going to give her a chance to again show her hospitality.

Panic at Winside—Since witnessing the "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" performance last week some of our bravest ladies, those who are not even afraid of a mouse, dare not go down cellar for potatoes without taking a lamp, two or three members of the family and all the cats and dogs around the house.—Winside Tribune.

It looks as if the law had a grudge against editors. First they take away newspaper mileage, then they pass a bill prohibiting hoboes from riding on trains. Now how the deuce do they expect an editor to get to the state convention? But the editors beat out the law this time—there's no law yet against walking, and that's what they're doing today, to get to the state association meeting in Omaha.

ATCHISON GLOBE SIGHTS.

Foolish remarks always sound more foolish when heard through a telephone.

The amusement of boys loses a great deal of its fascination if they have someone's permission to indulge in it.

When a woman says she has made up her mind never to marry, people begin to wonder what they quarreled about.

Perhaps they called them "cross examinations" because the witness feels that way when he is undergoing the ordeal.

When a grandmother cannot think of any other excuse for a child's fussing she immediately recommends worm medicine.

There is too much attention paid to the "influence" of women over men, and too little said about the fear men have of women.

Ashes sprinkled on the sidewalk at this season of the year look better to the average man than a marble fountain in the front yard.

Nearly every mother imagines her daughter has musical talent, and frequently she makes the mistake of trying to develop that talent to the neglect of plain sewing.

A woman is traveling over the country delivering a lecture entitled: "How Wives Should Act to Keep Husbands After They Get Them." Every woman who reads this will be indignant.