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PUNISH THE PARENTS.

At La Grande, Ore., a few days ago, a 13-year-old girl with the unromantic name Lucy Prow attempted suicide because she was denied the love of the man whom she adored. Were it not for the seriousness of the situation one might find rare humor in the letter which the lovesick child left to tell her parents of the cause of her rash act:

"Dear Friends: I leave you now. I cannot bear the pain of life any longer. I love Davie Coon with the love of my life. When they denied me of him it very near killed me. I leave you now to go to my heavenly Father in heaven. Good-bye to all.

"The heavenly cross I bear, Jesus, I am coming there."

Attached to this parting missive was the request that none of deponent's clothing be removed. "It is my last request," she wrote. It appears from the La Grande Observer that Davie Coon "is a sport who came here several months ago," and the Observer concludes from this circumstance that the parents of little Lucy have not properly attended to the training of their child. Lucy swallowed carbolic acid but has recovered. She followed the example set by another child of tended years, the two cases constituting the material for serious thought on the part of the people of La Grande.

A 13-year-old girl who is unable to bear the pain of life because of the fact that Davie Coon would not remain in town and love her, or because she might not find it convenient to meet him and listen to his soft protestations of endearing affection, and who is thereby reduced to the extremity of swallowing carbolic acid, evidently being convinced that the circumstances called for the most horrible death she could provide for herself—such 13-year-old girl ought to be spanked. But Miss Lucy is not nearly so much to blame as her parents. Presumably Lucy has been accorded liberties which are not extended to children of her tender age by considerate parents, and that she formed so strong an affection for Mr. Davie Coon is not surprising. Had she been properly trained at home she would not have fallen into desperate love with the itinerant sport, and there would have been no drinking of carbolic acid nor penning of sinshy farewells to her host of dear friends. Instead Lucy would have been studying her third reader and planning to bring joy to the hearts of her mother and father by distinguishing herself at school.

The county court of Union county should summon Mr. and Mrs. Prow before it and require them to show cause why they should not be denied legal custody of their child. There is no other form of punishment provided in our civil law, which is one of our misfortunes. We have too many instances of the reckless depravity of children who are permitted to roam the streets at will, and a law which would reach negligent parents would be a great blessing.

NATIONAL AID FOR ROADS.

We are in receipt of a copy of the Brownlow bill, recently introduced in the house by the gentleman from Tennessee whose name it bears and in the senate by Mr. Gallinger, of New Hampshire, together with a comprehensive statement from Representative Brownlow as to its aims and probable results. The bill gives evidence of careful study of the great problem of good roads and we regard it as a measure which should receive unanimous support in both houses of congress.

The measure carries an appropriation of \$24,000,000, at the annual rate of \$8,000,000, to be apportioned among the several states according to their population, with the provision, however, that states having less than 700,000 population shall receive \$250,000. There are 16 such states in the union and \$4,000,000 is to be apportioned to them. The remaining \$20,000,000 is to be divided among the other 29 states according to the number of inhabitants of each. The bill creates a road building department under the supervision of the secretary of agriculture and provides for the officials who are to direct the disbursement of the government funds.

The important feature of the bill is that which specifies that those states accepting government aid

must appropriate similar amounts from their own treasuries. This proposition insures the expenditure of \$48,000,000 on the highways of the nation. Those states which neglect to make application for funds before January 1, 1907, will be excluded from the benefit and the surplus funds thus created shall be reallocated to the different states which have taken up the entire amounts apportioned to them. The governors of the several states are required, under the terms of the bill, to make application, within 30 days after adjournment of the next legislature convening after the passage of the act, for national aid, and in event of their failure to do so the proper officers having jurisdiction of the public highways in the civil subdivisions of the states may make application to the road director for the assistance which the governors may have declined to ask. This provision makes it possible for road districts to take advantage of the government's generosity.

Our government has devoted its attention to nearly all other matters except good roads. In 1903 it appropriated \$32,540,199 for rivers and harbors, and we believe the appropriation asked for highways should be granted. The benefit to be derived from suitable highways are too obvious to be set forth at this time. The great problem is to arouse interest in their construction. Nothing else would go so far in this direction as a liberal national appropriation, and, the experiment once successfully tried, annual appropriations could be looked for in the future. Best of all, perhaps, under the terms of the Brownlow act the most approved methods of construction would be employed, to the lasting benefit of the agricultural districts and the cities depending upon them.

When T. T. Geer assumed editorial control of the Statesman he proceeded to pitch into Colonel Hofer, editor of the Journal, and the two have since been going it. The following reply is made by the Journal to one of the former governor's onslaughts: "The Statesman editor has had some reference to the fondness of the Journal editor for sauerkraut. We submit in all fairness that this is a violation of the rules of the ring. It is striking below the belt. The man who eats sauerkraut as an article of diet is doing so in pursuance of the liberty guaranteed by the constitution. The enjoyment of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness was mentioned in the declaration of independence. What is known as the sauerkraut habit has brought up some good citizens and it is a harmless and non-intoxicating beverage. We are willing to differ with the Statesman editor on some minor matters like giving tips to Pullman car waiters. But he should not attack our national article of diet. We recommend that he buy a barrel of sauerkraut and proceed to replenish his long, lean and lanky form. Sauerkraut will build up his cadaverous, beapole style of anatomy and possibly get some new ideas into circulation."

In an abstract just issued by the bureau of statistics of the department of commerce and labor a comparative statement is given of the debts of the leading nations of the world. How heavily burdened with obligations these chief nations are few people realize, and few are aware how unevenly these national burdens are distributed. The total indebtedness of the civilized powers is put at about \$35,000,000,000. But of this total about half is carried by five European countries—France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Spain. The greatest debtor nation in the world is France—at the same time one of the richest and the most frugal. An enormous outstanding debt is one of the cherished traditions of French statesmanship; and neither the French government nor the French people can be brought to view with alarm the fact that France's obligations reach nearly \$6,000,000,000, more than a sixth of the total indebtedness of the world.

Henry Watterson expresses the joyful fear that the republicans have been making a tool of Mr. Bryan, and points to the prominence given him on his recent European trip as evidence of the designing of the administration representatives abroad. Mr. Watterson need not fear on this score. Mr. Bryan achieved distinction in the United States and he was merely received with decency abroad, just as Mr. Watterson might be if he were to go to Europe. That Mr. Watterson fails to distinguish between courtesy and political rascality is lamentable, and that he parades his ignorance in the public press is even more to be regretted.

The San Francisco Bulletin is looking for a name for the people of the United States. It points out that we are not Americans any more than are the people of Mexico or Canada, and, indeed, the people of South America might as well call themselves Americans. The late Colonel Pat Donan, during the course of an address to high school students in Astoria, once referred to the people of the United States as "United Statesians," and the name, we believe, is the best which has ever been suggested to technically designate them.

Ex-Senator Simon says he is not longer to be considered as an aspirant for senatorial honors. We take it Mr. Simon has made a discovery.

The United States Mints...

were organized in 1792. The coinage of nickels was begun in 1866. The latest report from the Mints shows that 445,841,054 nickels have been coined since that time,—value \$22,292,052.70

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