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THURSDAY, FEB. 8, 1917.

CRUELTY TO MULES

A late cable dispatch reveals a new atrocity of the war, and it is not charged against the Germans, either. This time it is the French. They, it is well known, have bought and are using many of our mules, but they complain that the song of these animals too often conveys to the enemy information as to the position of supply trains, and invites showers of shells that otherwise at least, would not be as well directed as they are now.

So the French veterinarians have devised a method—a laryngeal operation of some sort, apparently—that deprives, wholly and permanently, the mule of his justly celebrated bray!

Now, that is not right. Bray- ing is the only joy that a mule has in life. Of all other he was long since robbed, and a muled mule may well complain of man's inhumanity.

In our own armies the mule, if not exactly loved, was always respected, bray and all, in spite of his uncertainties of temper and heels. If the French didn't like him as he was, they had only to leave him.

The following was handed us by a subscriber:

POOR THINGS!

Of course it's none of our business, but we just can't help wondering what there is about the female form that keeps some of our young girls from freezing these cold winter days. You understand, now, that we don't know a thing about it, but we've been told that they just don't wear hardly anything. Why, only this week we heard a girl say that another girl was old-fashioned because she wore long sleeved (pardon us) under apparel. She didn't say "apparel," either; but it means that, and the girl who was doing the talking about the other girl didn't have on that kind. Anyway she said she didn't. But she had on some hose that were fully as thick as a cigarette paper slit twice. We can easily see how a girl might powder her face thick enough to keep it from freezing, and since we don't know anything about them, and it ain't any of our business, we just guess they powder right good and plenty all over and then put on a few clothes to keep the powder from blowing off.

What's The Use?

Knock and the knocker is with you, boost and you hear a groan: the town's dead broke and about to croak and the knocker says leave it alone. Knock and the knocker will cheer you, boost you are headed a brick, he makes an excuse and says it's no use, to boost for a town that's sick. Knock and the knocker adores you, boost and you're up a stump; he lets out a yelp and refuses to help and business goes bumpity-bump. A banquet won't help the knocker he'd knock if you'd fed him pie, he would not strive to make things thrive, he'd rather see Springfield die."

TO BUILD SHIPS AT COST PRICE

Bethlehem Steel Will Make Of-

fer to Uncle Sam.

BIDS ON 16 INCH NAVY SHELLS

No Chance For Profit In Them Under Present Tests, Grace Says—Possible Explanation of the Prices Made by an English Firm Which Bids Under All American Manufacturers.

Speaking recently before the Terra- pin Club of Philadelphia, Eugene G. Grace, President of the Bethlehem Steel Company, said in part:

In a peculiar sense Bethlehem Steel serves the American people. For example, though we have been able to obtain in Europe almost any price, we have adhered, in our charges to the United States Government, to the basis of prices established before the war began.

We agreed—if the Government would abandon its plans for a Federal plant—to make armor for our Navy at any price the Government itself might consider fair.

Our ordnance plants are at the disposal of the nation at a fair operating cost, plus a small margin, thus saving the Government investment and depreciation.

One of the special needs of the new navy is sixteen-inch guns—guns sixty feet long and capable of hurling a 2000 pound shell with such power and accuracy as to hit a 50 foot square target fifteen miles away.

We have undertaken voluntarily to construct, at a cost of \$4,500,000, a plant fitted to build sixteen-inch guns.

Under no conceivable circumstances can orders which we may receive for this plant pay even a fair return on the investment.

Considerable comment has been made upon the fact that a British manufacturer recently bid less than American manufacturers for sixteen and fourteen-inch shells for the navy.

I am unable to state the basis upon which the English bid was made. It should be remembered, however, that this bid was for a specific shell, samples of which are being sent over for test—a test not yet made.

Two years ago we took an order for 2400 fourteen-inch armor-piercing shells at a contract price of \$768,000, to be delivered within a certain time or we had to pay a large penalty.

The only specifications for making these shells are that they shall be of a certain size and must pierce armor-plate at a certain velocity on impact. It is impossible to foretell the exact conditions of the tests.

We had made large quantities of shells in the past which had been accepted. But in placing this particular order the Department altered the angle at which the tested shells must pierce armor-plate. The result, however, has been absolute inability on our part to produce in any quantity, shells which will meet these novel tests. In fact, we know of no process of projectile-making through which it is possible to produce in quantities shells which will conform to the requirements.

The result is that up to now on that contract of \$768,000, we have put into actual operating expense \$447,881, and have been penalized for non-delivery \$495,744, a total of \$943,625, with no receipts whatever.

Such was the experience in the light of which we were called upon recently to bid for sixteen-inch shells.

We bid on these shells at approximately the same rate per pound as that of a fourteen-inch shell contract of one year ago upon which the Government awarded contracts.

We have not the slightest idea what profit there will be in the making of these shells. We do not know that there will be any. There is no certainty that it would be possible for us to deliver a shell to meet the test.

For officers in the Navy to assume that any bid made under such conditions is "exorbitant" is utterly unfair.

We bid on the new battle-cruisers sums which Navy department experts, after examination of our books, found would yield a profit of less than ten per cent. We agreed to assume risks for increased costs of materials and labor, that made it possible that these contracts might yield no profit whatever.

The costs run beyond the amount appropriated by Congress on the basis of the cost estimates made a year ago.

And because shipbuilders could not alter the inexorable cost facts and reduce bids to early estimates of the Navy Department, the prices are called "exorbitant."

It would be a real advantage to be relieved of this naval construction. The profit from it cannot possibly amount to much, and the responsibility is enormous.

We have determined to make this offer to the American Government.

If you will build two of the battle-cruisers in Government navy yards we will build the other two at the ascertained cost of building the ships in the Government yards, without additional expense or commissions of any kind. We will also contract to have our ships ready for service ahead of the Government ships."



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The Making of a Town

By Frank L. McVey

THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL—HEALTH.

"The public health is the foundation on which reposes the happiness of the people and the power of the country," said Lord Bacon's fourth century ago. The statement made then is still true. In the course of the next twelve months a million and a half persons will die in the United States; more than four million two hundred thousand and will be constantly sick, which is to say that over five million homes, containing twenty-million persons, will be affected and made wretched sometime during the year as a result of morbidity and mortality.

The cost of such wholesale sickness and death amounts to millions of dollars annually. Individually the American takes more baths than the average man of any other nation, but looked at from a communal point of view he is nearly as dirty as the people of what are usually referred to as the less enlightened lands. In Spain the death rate per million of population in the period from 1905 to 1908, from the most typical of filth and disease, typhoid, was 362; in the United States it was 288, while in Ireland it was 91, in England 80, in Prussia 61, and in Switzerland 46.

In the American community this condition of affairs may be traced to the want of cooperation on the part of citizens and the indifference of public officials, due largely to their lack of imagination and understanding of the meaning of sanitation. As a people we fail to appreciate the importance of health and the effect which it has upon the growth and progress of the community. There are a number of weighty problems involved in the growth of every town which are closely associated with its health and the extent of its death rate. They may be enumerated as, those dealing with the removal of garbage and ashes, the care of sewage, the source of water supply, the protection of milk and foods, and the prevention of epidemics in the public schools.

It has been the custom in the smaller communities to allow every citizen to determine for himself how his ashes and garbage and other refuse shall be handled, though happily we have passed beyond the day when the household refuse was spilled in the streets and slops thrown from the windows without regard to the finery of the passer-by on the paving below. The method much in vogue was for each individual to haul outside of the town limits the refuse from his household and deposit it where it could be done with the least inconvenience; but the refusal of land-owners to permit this sort of thing forced the creating of a municipal dump, which in most instances becomes a community disgrace, the abode of flies and stench. In the course of time every community will be brought to the maintenance of some sort of collection system, especially in view of the fact that it will not cost any more in the aggregate than the method of the individual dump.

The arrangements made for the disposal of community wastes are classified as the license, the contract, the municipal dumping systems. The license system is one under which an individual is given the privilege of visiting the various houses of the community to take away the refuse; this usually means an unsatisfactory collection, as the license does not wish to take all that he is asked to carry away. The contract system is one under which the town enters into an arrangement with some individual to remove the refuse at so much a cubic yard or at a stated price for the year for the whole job. While the municipal system is one that the community operates, undertaking to carry on the collection, paying the cost from public funds. Any of these methods, however, may result in the plan of dumping on land where burning, plowing under, or feeding may follow as a means of destroying the accumulations. The erection of a municipal incinerator for the purpose of destroying the organic material is by far the most satisfactory, though dump burning has much to be said for it as against allowing accumulations without any attempt at disposal.

Another question looms large in the disposal of community waste. House sewerage amounts to about thirty gallons per person per day, and the problem of disposing of this becomes exceedingly difficult for any community. The cost of building a proper sewer system is one that forces some short cut method of dealing with the waste, speaking in broad terms, remain to the community; either the draining of it into the water of a stream or allowing the soil to take care of it. There is a limit to the capacity of water to absorb and purify itself after contamination with sewage. The usual method had been to carry it off in some stream or lake, but as populations grow very serious objections arise to a method of this kind, since the burden is merely shifted and the problem of drainage and freedom from stench is left unsolved.

Sewage is largely water, containing very little inorganic matter, and this fact has made the method of sedimentation attractive to a good many sanitary engineers, because by confining the effluent to tanks and stimulating sedimentation by chemicals the water can be drained off without a heavy charge of organic matter. The best known of these is the septic tank through which the sewage flows slowly, relying upon bacteria to break up the solid matter. It provides for the first stage of bacterial action, breaking up the sludge by the bacteria and bring about a reduction of the organic matter.

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