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A PALL OF DEATH. WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE?

As the Canadian Pacific liner, the Empress of Ireland, carrying 87 first cabin, 153 second cabin and 714 third cabin passengers and a crew of 413, was steaming on the upper reaches of the St. Lawrence river, after entering from the Gulf of St. Lawrence, on Friday morning last, a bank of fog rolled out over the river from the shore, near Rimouski. The sky was clear and the sun shining as the fog advanced, while two miles away the Spanish collier Storstad, a large steamer, was in full sight of the Empress. Then the great passenger steamer was enveloped in the mist and nothing could be seen fifty yards from her decks. The fog had come down upon her and proved a veritable pall of death. Capt. Kendall, her commander, realizing that progress involved danger of collision, ordered his ship to lie to until the fog had lifted, and before doing so, and while the Storstad was still in sight, signalled that vessel of his purpose and received the reply that his signal was understood. The Storstad took no such precaution, however, but steamed ahead and as straight as an arrow from the bow, bore down upon the Empress and plowghed into her side amidship, then backed off and steamed away. Through a great rent in the side of the Empress the water rushed into the doomed ship, and in fifteen minutes she sank in 90 feet of water, carrying down about half her crew and upwards of 750 of her passengers. The fog had then lifted and the Storstad was a mile and a half away. She made a feeble effort to rescue some of the drowning people from the Empress, but, in the opinion of Capt. Kendall, should have heeded his appeal to have remained with her prow in the side of the Empress until that vessel could have been forged ahead by her engines to land and all aboard her saved. As long as the rent in her side might have been plugged by the Storstad the water of the deep river could not have entered in sufficient volume to have sunk her. And this, in brief, is the story of a marine disaster, second only to that of the loss of the Titantic, of recent years. The death list, it is said, numbered 969, and a large majority of the lost were women and children.

And a most natural inquiry now is, could not the disaster have been avoided? Was it inevitable, and is nobody to blame for the awful consequences? If responsibility can be placed should not a penalty, commensurate with the magnitude of the appalling disaster be inflicted upon whoever may be found guilty of negligence in causing the collision, and of not using every possible human effort that should have been employed, if only a single human life had been imperilled instead of nearly a thousand to be saved.

In these days of modern appliances for the safety of the lives of those who go down to the sea in ships, it is more than lamentable that so many should have perished in a sea the surface of which was not disturbed by a ripple, and in the broad light of day only partially, and for a very brief period, obscured by a fog. That a most thorough investigation of the disaster should be made by the proper authorities, no matter upon whom the responsibility, if there be any, shall fall. Surely there was somewhere human negligence, or lack of foresight, in the occurrence of an accident of the sea, if by any stretch of courtesy such a deplorable loss of human life can be called an accident. To what error of judgment can it be attributed? Human judgment, is, of course, more or less fallible, but there are callings in which no man should engage unless he can keep a clear head and avoid taking chances when the rights and lives of others than himself are involved. Is this one of such cases? And did somebody err in judgment or take chances on avoiding a collision? Let the facts be made known to the world.

Nobody is finding any fault with lack of prosperity in Alabama, where the candidates have just reported $400,000 spent in the recent primaries.

CONSTITUTIONALISTS NOT PLEASED

The course of the A. B. C. mediators is not pleasing to the Constitutionalists. Neither Carranza nor Villa will be content to be considered a negligible quantity in the settlement of Mexican affairs. It is rather surprising that the mediators and President Wilson have taken a view of the subject that would practically eliminate the victorious Constitutionalists from anything but a secondary place in these affairs. Carranza has issued a statement, well expressed and forcible, in which he is supported by Villa, in which it is claimed that the Constitutionalists are already in control in two-thirds of the country and are making as rapid progress towards the City of Mexico as is possible with the destruction of the railroads which they have to repair as they advance. They have no mind to give up all they have accomplished to a commission to be charged with governing the country until an election can be held. They will not consent, either, that Huerta may be permitted to save his face by becoming a candidate for the Presidency. They say he is a murderer who deserves only the guillotine or the garote. They are to be commended for that determination. It seems beyond possibility to imagine, even, that President Wilson would consent to anything but the entire elimination of Huerta from Mexican affairs, and any intimation that he will do otherwise must be believed to be an absolute error.

At any rate it may be set down as an undeniable fact that Carranza and Villa and their supporters will not cease fighting and it would be monstrous to suppose, for a moment, that the power of the United States can be invoked to crush them, no matter what the views of the mediators may be on the subject. American sympathy will be very apt to turn to the people who have all along been fighting, and fighting successfully, against the assassin and traitor Huerta and his usurpation. If President Wilson shall antagonize them it will place him in a very unenviable light before the American people. He may consent to mediation with the followers of Huerta, but in doing so he will make a grievous mistake by not taking Carranza and Villa into the reckoning.

HYATTSVILLE

Yes, Hyatsville is on the map. At least it is on maps drawn upon the Rand & McNally scale and perhaps on some of larger extent. But it is not a large town, though it constantly looms up in importance in the minds of a great many people. It is incorporated, at least presumably so, as it has one official who is very conspicuous, especially in the eyes of automobilists—a constable. It has a speed ordinance or law and woe be to the tourists or joy riders who transgress it. But its redoubtable constable was persuaded to make an exception in its application to Mrs. Sayre and Miss Margaret Wilson, daughters of the President as they were returning from Baltimore to Washington on Saturday last, notwithstanding their chauffeur was running their car at a 35-mile clip. But it did require the prayers and persuasive eloquence of some of the most prominent residents of the town to induce the usually obdurate official to relax his vigilance and permit the ladies to proceed. Yet, after all, it may be to the credit of the constable that he has never before, as far as known, made an exception in the case of any prominent citizen of the United States caught transgressing the law within the limits of his bailiwick. And he has been sustained by the court, in a case or two, where an effort was made to have his authority ignored. Hyattsville has been widely advertised because of his zeal in enforcing the speed law.

But that is not its only distinction. The fact is its officials, and possibly its citizens also, seem to be possessed of a spirit of obstruction, and residents along a proposed railroad route, stretching from the National Capital to the great battlefield of Gettysburg, are suffering the sonsequences if this antipathy of Hyatsville to modern progress. For it's Hyattsville that has held up the construction of that railroad, for a matter of two years or more, by inducing the Civil Service Commission to refuse the company authority to cross the roads in or near the town at grade, thus interposing an almost insuperable obstruction to the further progress of the work. And so a large extent of country is suffering the inconveniences of a lack of railroad facilities in consequence of the obstinacy of Hyattsville, backed up by the interests of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

Hyattsville, it is true, is a comparatively insignificant village in size and population—the Century Cyclopedia credit it with 150 inhabitants in 1897, and as it is about a century old the number cannot greatly exceed those figures—but in some respects it is exerting widespread influence.

If the railroad magnates have a chance to buy another road for twice what it is worth, they should snap it up quick, or it may go up to four times its value.

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That Col. Roosevelt, Ex-President of the United States, is an extraordinary man, with a record of achievements in many directions that have not been paralleled by any other man of his day, must be generally admitted. And strange and varied as have been his experiences, the paths he has followed, and the things he has done, he has never been a fakir. As an author he wrote voluminously and interestingly. As a cowboy he was chief of them all. As a Civil Service Reformer he had the courage of his convictions and was largely instrumental in establishing the existing system upon the country, though there can be found vast numbers of his countrymen who are hostile to it. As a soldier he was the commander of rough riders of whom he was the roughest. As Governor of New York, but more directly as President of the United States, he left his impress upon legislation and popular government generally in a manner that cannot be effaced. As a naturalist, seeking to add to the world's store of knowledge of the animal life of the dark continent, he enriched the Smithsonian Institution with a vast number of specimens gathered through his intrepidity and daring on the plains and in the jungles of Africa. And recently, in his expedition to South America, he widened his own and the world's knowledge of the flora of that wonderful continent and added to a marvellous achievement in knowledge of its geography. That one thing was his discovery of an uncharted river, 1000 miles long, which has never been shown upon a map of any kind. That was a discovery that places him upon the list of distinguished discoverers and geographers of the world and carries him into a realm which seemed to lie beyond his ambition.

The Sentinel believes in his claim to the truth of this discovery, wonderful as it seems. He has critics who deride it. Who say that such a river can only lie in a region in which its waters must run uphill. But it can hardly be doubted that he will confound them. That he will make good the truth of the discovery to the world.

The Sentinel does not subscribe to many of his political ideas and was more than grieved by his disruption of the Republican party. But he cannot be put in the class of Dr. Cook as a nature fakir. What he says he saw, he did see, and his word is to be accepted as truth. Let some one of the unbelieving scientists undertake to disprove it. It cannot be doubted that he will undertake to prove it to the satisfaction of the world.

Missouri is planting 50,000 fruit and shade trees in the highways. The fruit won't taste nearly as good to the Small Boy as if it were in some one's back yard.

THE GOVERNORS IN CONFERENCE

The seventh annual conference of governors is to be held at Madison, Wis., June 9. When these annual meetings were started, their enthusiastic promoters hoped they might attain the power almost of a third House of Congress. The actual results have of course been very much less.

As it has worked, the governors themselves have not aiyways taken the meetings very seriously. Some of them did not feel like taking long journeys merely to take part in a debating forum. And a governor does not always look as big at this meeting as he did in his capitol at home. The influence he is able to exert dwindles when he crosses his state boundary.

Nevertheless, these meetings can be made very useful in considering plans for uniform state action. In a great many matters endless confusion is caused by needless differences in state laws. The meeting gives a chance to map out broad lines of uniform policy which the state legislatures shall be asked to accept.

THE PASSING OF A TYPE

The government has been called in to help provide emergency help to harvest the crops. Kansas alone wants 40,000 men for its winter wheat. This is a reminder that the problem of finding good agricultural labor is a pressing one and grows more so.

The farm hand has been in the past a very sturdy and dependable type. As featured in the rural dramas, he looked rustic and stupid. On an average, though, he had fair intelligence, and no end of capacity for day's works.

He was not very ambitious, but was gifted with a philosophical temperament. He and the hired girl ate at the first and only table with the family, the food was good and abundant, he was sure of his future. As he spent little for clothes, and nothing for amusement, he usually had a fair savings bank account.

A farmer was remarking the other day that this type is about extinct. Instead, he now has to depend on roving young fellows. At the best they look at farm work as a mere stepping stone to something else. At the worst they want to earn money for extravagant spending. Last summer he had a young man who left him with $100 in the bank. A month later he came back and asked for work again, saying that his money had all been spent.

In many localities, foreign speaking help is all that can be had. If you send them for a rake, they get a monkey wrench. Those that have much intelligence usually prefer to buy a little land on mortgage and be their own boss. Also they prefer to remain in the company of their own people. One is rarely contented unless there are others speaking the same tongue near by.

The Department of Agriculture ought not to look at this as any mere temporary problem of harvesting the present crop of wheat and corn. It is a situation that the farmer finds more and more difficult to meet, and one that calls for thoughtful and practical study.

Under strict seal of confidence, the mediators have revealed to the correspondents at Niagara Falls the startling information that they prefer eggs for breakfast.

Railroad stockholders sometimes attend the meetings where their money is spent, and are allowed to take part in the business by moving to adjourn.

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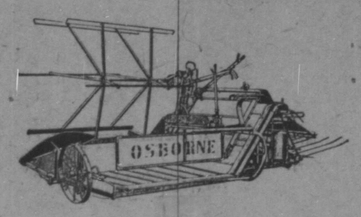
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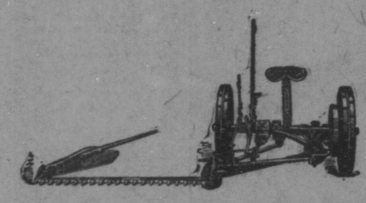
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Even though a newspaper should announce in 37 separate issues that Huerta had been killed the day before, some people are so confiding that they would keep on buying the paper and believing what it says.

Children Cry
FOR FLETCHER'S
CASTORIA

It must be expected that the golfers should keep on playing Sundays, but they might well refrain from knocking balls through the open windows of churches in the neighborhood.

Children Cry
FOR FLETCHER'S
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Even if the cross-roads band does give its opening concert soon, the inhabitants can always take refuge in the woods.

It is expected that Huerta will give solemn guarantees of his willingness to retire when he feels like it.

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