

The Indianapolis Times

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No law shall be passed restraining the free interchange of thought and opinion, or restricting the right to speak, write, or print freely, on any subject whatever.—Constitution of Indiana.

ONE CLOSED INCIDENT

What the Federal judge of this district called "a most shameful incident" of local history has now been closed with the sentencing of four Negroes and one white man.

The law, apparently, has been satisfied by giving punishment to these men for stealing and sending back to drinkers, whisky which had been confiscated by the Government and which was in the custody of the Government.

One of the Negroes will spend four months in jail. Another will remain there for a year and a day. A third will be back in six months.

Thus the law punishes those who stole, or admitted they stole, whisky estimated to be worth \$80,000 at bootleg prices.

Of the two other men who were convicted, although protesting their innocence of buying this confiscated whisky, more punishment will be demanded. They will spend eighteen months in prison.

These punishments should deter any employee of the Federal Government from embarking in crime of this sort, crime which, as has been said, was denounced by the court as constituting a most shameful incident.

The history of the case and of this punishment should be told again and again in order that no one may be tempted to repeat it.

The Government of the United States, using its great powers and determined that whisky should not be sold, swooped down upon a distillery which was suspected of selling its store of goods in an illegal manner.

There was then \$300,000 worth of whisky and this was taken in order that it might not be sold to criminally-minded citizens who would drink it.

The whisky was stored in the Federal building, there to be held until a court should order it destroyed and taken forever from the possibility of tempting the weak or corrupting the already corrupt.

That whisky was presumably to be there until a New York Congressman arose in Washington and declared that 350 cases of the 1,400 were no longer in the Federal building.

At once the United States marshal, in whose custody the whisky was, declared that no whisky was missing. The next statement he made was that it was impossible for anyone to tell how much whisky was gone because it had never been counted. He made no statement in explanation later when it was discovered that he had given a receipt to the court for a very exact amount.

The marshal was mistaken in his denial that whisky was missing for a check by an official from Washington revealed the fact that approximately the number of cases which the New York Congressman said were missing were really gone.

The arrest of the three Negro janitors was very swift sequence to a confirmation of the charge that this vast amount of whisky had been taken from the custody of Federal officials.

It is a matter of congratulation that on the last day before trial, one of the men, the one who will spend a year and a day in prison, made a supplemental confession which accounted for all the whisky, for up to that time the other two had been sure that they had stolen only a small amount and such a condition might have left the public mind open to the thought that there was still some mystery.

But the confession did come. Every one of the missing 350 cases was accounted for.

The swift punishment of these three Negro janitors for this shameful incident carries its own warning of the terrible fate of those who make a mockery of law and especially of the court.

You can't steal 350 cases of confiscated whisky from the Government and turn it over to bootleggers and not suffer.

If you do, you may count on spending the next four months or six months or a year behind prison bars.

Unquestionably these sentences will have a most salutary effect upon all Federal employees. They should terrify any others who may have large quantities of confiscated whisky in their custody. They should be sufficient to safeguard the stores and stocks which are held here in the future.

The old adage rings true still. You can't commit crime and get away with it. Murder will always out.

WATCH YOUR STEP!

A maiming, killing giant is rushing across the country, like a plague, more powerful than Mars. It is the giant of traffic, and every year its toll grows more ghastly and tremendous.

Last year 24,000 persons, enough to form the population of a good-sized city, were killed in traffic accidents. In that time 630,000 were injured.

During the World War 118,563 Americans soldiers—including 276 nurses—lost their lives. The total number killed in action was 36,815. Figuring that America was in the World War for a year and a half and taking the ratio of traffic accidents as that of 1925, traffic is a greater killer than war. Mercury a more powerful destroyer than Mars.

Think of nearly a million human beings, more people than there are in Baltimore, more than there are in Cleveland, or Boston, or St. Louis, lying in hospitals as the result of traffic accidents! Yet nearly a million injuries would be the ration for a year and a half, on the basis of the 1925 casualties.

Thirty-six thousand lying in morgues! That is the total sacrifice to the rolling wheels in a year and a half, computed with 1925's deaths as a medium.

YOU MUST WATCH YOUR STEP!

ONE PRIMARY WORKS

"Primaries need not be expensive."

In Oregon—unlike Pennsylvania—there is a primary law that works and the people seem to like it. It works so well that no primary has ever cost over \$20,000 and candidates who are unfriendly to the law are defeated.

In Oregon, as in other States, the bosses and professional politicians are unfriendly to the primary system. They would like to go back to the boss and convention plan. But whenever they are tempted to try the turn they remember 1910 and change their minds. In 1910 one Jay Bowerman, Republican, ran on an avowed platform for a return to the convention system. Although the State is normally Republican, Bowerman was defeated by Oswald West, Democrat, who stood for preserving the primary act.

In the recent senatorial campaign which resulted

in the defeat of Senator Stanfield by Frederick Steiner, the preservation of the primary law was part of the issue. Politicians of both parties had about concluded that the time had come to again make a drive to repeal the primary act. Steiner was pretty well committed to the plan and it was believed that Stanfield was of much the same mind. In furtherance of the drive several county conventions were held, three Republican and two Democratic. But a third candidate appeared in the field in the person of Alfred E. Clark, who openly charged a deal between the old parties to abolish the primary.

Clark offered himself as the candidate pledge to preserve the primary.

This produced a lively discussion. The Republican and Democratic candidate were called upon to define their attitude toward the primary. They took to cover and all declared for the primary. At the same time the calling of county conventions was stopped. But when the ballots were counted it was found that Clark, not a regular candidate, and acting merely as champion of the primary, had polled 21,000 as against the 29,000 of Stanfield and the 39,000 of Steiner.

Except for the issue of saving the primary act, the election went off on personal matters.

The Oregon law permits no "paid workers." In this respect it differs sharply from the Pennsylvania law. It specifies for what purposes money may be spent by the candidate or his representatives. It defines political advertising, which is one of the purposes for which money can be spent. Travel, halls and billing are other legitimate expenses.

In the recent Oregon primary, Ira L. Patterson was nominated for Governor by the Republicans. He is pledged to maintain the primary, as is the present Governor, Walter M. Pierce.

On the whole, the Oregon experiment seems to prove that it is possible to have a primary where wholesale expenditures do not take place and which so well express public opinion that the voters desire to protect the law against attacks by politicians and corruptionists.

THE GOD OF HARVEST

Out in Kansas the machines of the harvest are hymning a mighty paean to the god of harvest. The great wheat plains are redolent with riches. Millions of stalks are giving to the world their fruits.

In Kansas alone, one hundred and thirty-three million bushels of wheat! The vast rippling surface of gold in the southwest is cheer and food and wealth to the nation. Pessimism is gone, and it is a time for smiling, harvest time.

New wheat was listed the other day at \$1.55. The indication is that the price will rise higher rather than slump. With this the prospect, Kansas should be enriched by at least \$200,000,000 through her fertile fields.

It is an augury and a thrill for the nation.

WE ARE YOUNG

One hundred and fifty years ago the famous Liberty Bell first clanged on American independence and in Philadelphia they are celebrating the anniversary with a great exposition.

James T. Montgomery, who for twenty-five years stood guard over the sacred bell, is dead, on the eve of his 150th birthday.

America is a young country, and to Americans 150 years seems a long time. But not so long when you stop to think that a thing that as old as the greatest nation on earth has been watched over by one man for one-sixth of its life.

If you enjoy your work it's almost as much fun as loafing.

Trying to impress people is a poor way to impress people.

The straight and narrow path doesn't need any speed cops.

Sometimes just about everything seems to be almost miraculous.

After a man breaks his word it isn't as good as it was.

Collecting bills is easy. All of us have a collection of them.

NOW IF BRAINS WOULD ONLY GO TO HOLLYWOOD

By Mrs. Walter Ferguson

Never has there been put out more excellent advice than that recently given to girls by Miss Marion L. Mell, director of the women's division of the Central Casting Corporation at Hollywood. Miss Mell says, "Stay at home and don't seek fame and fortune in the movies."

Let us hope that some millions of ordinary young women will take this message to heart.

One of the things that has brought this condition about and perhaps contributed to the downfall of many a simple girl, is the story of enormous salaries paid to movie stars and all the gorgeous pictures of the easy life they lead. The idea has become prevalent that a lovely face is all that is needed and that little work or art is attached to this calling. And indeed most of the pictures we see verify the fact that one need only be a beautiful dumbbell with long eyelashes to get a job.

But, after all, life holds the same longings in Hollywood that it does in Honeygrove, Texas. Nor all the glare of the spotlights will serve to satisfy those longings. For the happiness that publicity brings is short-lived indeed. Somebody else is always coming along to crowd you off the front page. You may have your brief day in the glare of public notice, but that day will pass all too soon and you will be obliged to settle down to humdrum life like the rest of us.

And in this world it is the humdrum life that counts. There is where you find your best happiness. You may be proud of the work you have done and the praise you deserve from it, but the stable things which bring you joy are those simple things that have always contributed to the happiness of women.

You who watch with longing the pictured face of beauty upon the screen, may be a great deal more fortunate and happier than she whom you so envy.

One thing is certain these days: A long-suffering public earnestly hopes that the young women of the country will listen to Miss Mell's advice. If they have only come to bring to the screen, let us pray that they do stay at home. We already have enough of smirking bathing beauties. What we long for now is somebody with a little acting ability.

Tracy

There Is a Serious Threat
In This Pennsylvania
Primary Mess.

By M. E. Tracy

Senator Reed has found at least one man whom he thinks should be prosecuted in connection with the Pennsylvania slush fund.

That is of small importance compared to the fact that, as a whole, the Pennsylvania slush fund represents a moral outrage.

Whether it was generally collected and expended within the law, or whether some of its collections and expenditures were of such a nature that those responsible for them can legally be punished, it smells to high heaven of abuse and extravagance.

The cry that "custom called for cash" only visualized its threat as all the more serious.

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Constitution Points Way

The Constitution of the United States provides that each house of Congress shall be the judge of its own members.

This means that each house can censure, suspend, or expel such members as are guilty of conduct which, in its opinion, is unbecoming to their office and that, too, quite regardless of whether they have violated any law, or are subject to legal prosecution.

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Potential Examples

William S. Vare, who won the Republican nomination for United States Senator in a primary which he and his supporters greased to the extent of \$600,000, or \$700,000, is a member of the House of Representatives.

George Wharton Pepper, who lost the nomination in the same primary, though he and his supporters greased it to more than twice that extent, is a member of the Senate.

Whether any law has been violated, or whether anybody can be punished, it is within the power of Congress to make an example of one or both of these men.

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Astonishing

Many a comment has been made on the indifference of Pennsylvanians to the way they were deluged with money.

It is far more astonishing, perhaps, that not one of the 535 members of Congress should have thought fit to invoke the power of the Constitution, the only effective method of reaching those who sought to profit by such huge and questionable expenditures.

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Matter of Degree

We have a law in this country that sends men to prison for peddling liquor by the pint.

We have a law too, that fines, or jails men for exceeding the prescribed speed limit, though they may have harmed no one.

Yet, here are a Senator and a Representative in Congress, admitted identified with a \$2,500,000 slush fund, raised and squandered for the sole purpose of influencing a State primary—a practice which, if carried to its ultimate conclusion, would wreck the republic.

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Precedents

Why, as Cicero asked concerning Cataline, is George Wharton Pepper permitted to occupy a seat in the Senate without rebuke, and why is William S. Vare permitted to do the same thing in the House?

Was the ostracism of Newberry a mere partisan gesture? Was the talk about Lorimer for no better purpose than to fill dull session?

If Berger's political opinion warranted his expulsion and if the publication of a vulgar document by Blanton warranted censure can Congress honestly say that it has no ground for noticing Pepper and Vare?

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Shades of the Fathers!

If it was not to meet just such emergencies as this, why did the fathers place a provision in the Constitution making each House the judge of its own members, without regard to impeachment, indictment or violation of law?

If Congress is unwilling to make use of the power granted it by the Constitution, or, what is even more startling, if no member is interested enough to see whether it is willing, why should State courts or legislatures show greater concern?

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Way Is Open

I have said that it was up to the people of Pennsylvania to wash their own dirty linen; that neither the Senate nor any other outside force could do it for them, but Congress might, at least, set them the right kind of an example.

Congress is handicapped by no red tape or legal technicalities. It can act on its own motion, and without being moved by more convincing evidence than its own opinion that some member is guilty of conduct which a lovely face is all that is needed and that little work or art is attached to this calling. And indeed most of the pictures we see verify the fact that one need only be a beautiful dumbbell with long eyelashes to get a job.

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In science the sensation called color, as perceived by looking at any ordinary object, is due to the incidence upon the eye of a train of waves of a definite wave number.

Scientifically, black is not a color,

since it is a condition incident to the complete absence, or the complete absorption of light waves.