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PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1915.

Avoid all grieving save for your own misdeeds.

Who Will Neutralize the Neutralizers?

OF COURSE Villa and Zapata would be delighted to have Mexico City neutralized. It would relieve their armies from much arduous labor and leave them free to fight in other parts of Mexico with the capital as the prize of final victory. But Carranza has yet to be heard from. He holds Vera Cruz and dominates the line of communication between the capital and the Gulf of Mexico. He has been asked to consent not only to the neutralization of Mexico City, but of the railroad as well. But if he should consent, what guarantee would any one have that either the railroad or the capital would remain neutral? Villa's guarantee is worthless. He would respect it only so long as he profited by it, and if it should appear to be to his advantage to seize the city he would not hesitate to send his army there.

The trouble with Mexico at the present time is that there is no one in the country able to guarantee anything. No Mexican leader will trust his fellow leaders any farther than he can see them. The groups formed today are broken up tomorrow and friends of last week are enemies next week. Yet Mr. Bryan would doubtless count it one of the greatest triumphs of his diplomatic career if he could secure signatures of Villa, Zapata and Carranza to a document purporting to neutralize the Mexican capital. And there are few who would be so cruel as to deny to him the pleasure to be derived from such an empty victory over the forces of disorder, even though some curious souls might be unkind enough to ask who would neutralize the neutralizers.

Let the Curfew Ring Every Night

THE only objection to the curfew rule which Director Porter intends to enforce is that it allows children under 16 years old to be on the street too late. Eleven o'clock is later than any boy or girl should be out at night unattended by parent or guardian. An hour earlier, or even two hours earlier, would be better. The street is not a proper place for children. If their parents do not keep them at home in the evening the police must do it for the sake of the community at large.

Few men become criminals after they reach maturity. The seeds of crime must be planted early if they are to germinate. The number of criminals between the ages of 16 and 21 years with which the courts have to deal is appallingly large. Each one of these youthful lawbreakers got his start in the evil associations of the streets at night. The enforcement of a curfew rule, therefore, is not a return to puritanical practices, but the application of common sense to a pressing problem.

Getting Together

AS THE song runs, "It is always fair weather when good fellows get together." This means that when all the good fellows engaged in business here get together there will be brighter skies over head for every business enterprise. The get-together movement of the Chamber of Commerce, to be celebrated by a dinner on Monday night, is pulling all the men into it who can work shoulder to shoulder with their fellows in putting the city in its rightful place in the commerce of the nation.

Philadelphia was once the greatest American city. Whether it shall ever regain that place does not matter, but it does matter whether every business man here does his utmost to develop the resources of the community and the country which it supplies, and utilizes to their limit all the opportunities for drawing new business not only to his own establishment, but to the establishments of his neighbors. If the whole community prospers every individual in it will share in the benefits. So keep on getting together, until those who flock by themselves are conspicuous because of their rarity.

Clothes Cycles

THE cycle of clothes completes itself with a regularity almost as unvarying as that of the seasons; but it takes years instead of months for the old fashions to recur. When Nature made a rose she looked upon it and pronounced it good. She reproduces it year after year in unvarying fashon, but man is not content with the cut of his coat for two seasons in succession. This is why it takes so long for the old fashons to reappear. They have to be forgotten by the mass before they can come back, even in a form at all suggestive of their first estate.

Let us take the cutaway coat as a type. Twenty-five or thirty years ago every young man owned one. It was usually made of diagonal worsted and the edges were bound with braid. The length of the tails and the number of buttons varied from season to season, but the general style of the coat was unchanged for several years. Then it disappeared, though hot-house specimens were occasionally seen. And the fashion of binding men's coats with braid went with it. But a year or two ago the cutaway coat came back. The early examples were rare as the first flowers of spring that show themselves when the sun begins to warm the sheltered places. But this year we are told that every man who wishes to be well dressed must have one, and they are all being bound, after the manner of their predecessors of the last century. They will be worn at fashionable style in all the churches on Easter and every well-dressed man on the boardwalk at Atlantic City will be clad in cutaway. The cycle has completed itself and we may expect the coats-tail coat as well as the three-cornered hat and the tight trousers to appear, for they completed the costume of the man of fashion in that far-off time when the newly recurring styles last prevailed, and when the dandy, once known as a fop and earlier called a beau, was characterized as a "dude."

Women's fashions recur also, and some observers of the human comedy are so bold as to insist that the women give to their Easter hat almost as much thought as the men have been giving to their new one-buttoned, braid-bound cutaway coats.

To Harrisburg on Tuesday

LET 10,000 disciples of the liquor ring march to Harrisburg if they wish. A show of popular power is an inalienable American privilege. The anti-local optionists have just as much right to demonstrate as any other people. Doubtless, too, they could give a demonstration that would be unique. They might, for instance, show their product. The march of the 10,000 would be a wonderful sight, provided the 10,000 should be made up of those who propose to prove, by an exhibition of themselves, that "booze" is a good thing, although it would not be wise to march under banners with the strange device, "Ten Sons in a Barroom."

For every opponent of local option that can be massed at Harrisburg Tuesday, the friends of local option should muster ten. That is about the numerical ratio of the two camps throughout the State. This is a challenge the friends of local option can meet with a cheer and jubilation. If a counting of hands is to determine the issue, if the liquor ring is ready to stand or fall by such a test, then let the Governor be backed up on Tuesday by so vast a multitude of adherents that never again in Pennsylvania will a liquor or any other ring attempt the obscuration of the public purpose.

Growing Harmony in Italy

ITALY, confronting a great crisis in her history, is different from the Italy which deprived the Pope of his temporal power. The Vatican statesmen have evidently decided that the time has come to abandon the policy of aloofness which they have pursued since Rome became the capital of United Italy in 1871, and to recognize more or less formally the status quo. The new Archbishop of Genoa has definitely prayed for Victor Emmanuel, the royal family and the civil and military authorities, and an amicable arrangement has been made between the Church and the State for the conduct of diplomatic negotiations in case of war. The Pope has agreed to dismiss the representatives of the hostile nations, and the King has agreed that the Pope may deal with the hostile capitals through the neutral diplomatists who will be asked to look after Italian interests.

This friendly co-operation could not have been arranged if the bitterness engendered by the seizure of the Papal States nearly 50 years ago were not disappearing. Even the great crisis would not have been sufficient to restore harmony between the political and the religious powers in Italy. It is useless to speculate on what the rapprochement means to the church, which has considered the whole subject most carefully before acting, and doubtless faces the future with a definite purpose. Italians everywhere must rejoice at what they regard as the beginning of the end of a deadlock which has been unfortunate both for Church and State ever since it began.

Money Is Needed for the Fourth

COUNCILS' Fourth of July Committee is expected to use all its influence with the General Assembly to secure the passage of a bill appropriating money for the celebration of the Nation's Birthday in Independence Square. If the anniversary is to be fittingly observed this year and in future years it is necessary that the Commonwealth join with the city in inviting the other States to participate. Although the title to the piece of ground on which Independence Hall stands is in the name of the city, the famous hall is a national possession. We have to guard it and preserve it as its custodians, but both city and State must make the nation welcome here on the great anniversary and must make it feel that the shrine belongs to it in a very real sense. This cannot be done without money. The expenses of the guests must be paid and adequate decorations must be provided, and the committees in charge must feel that they have ample funds to meet all reasonable expenses involved in a worthy celebration.

A bill making a State appropriation was introduced in Harrisburg early in the session, but it did not have the backing of the local authorities. The determination of the Committee of Councils to back this or a similar bill ought to be enough to secure its passage.

Admiral Fiske probably takes the Navy seriously.

The baseball season has been officially opened by a riot in Colon.

Industry is beginning to hum now that Congress has quit buzzing.

Perhaps Austria wants peace before there is nothing but the pieces left.

The Municipal Court is doing all it can to supply the hungry with jobs.

Chicago women are demonstrating their ability to play the game of politics.

There seems to be a feeling that "Billy" and the devil will not both remain in Paterson.

What's the use having a new dress if the weather man fixes it so that neither you nor it can get out?

The stormy weather for which the captain of the Eitel Friedrich has been praying is now blustering around Newport News.

They hung the portrait of Thomas Jefferson in a conspicuous place in Independence Hall yesterday to remind the Administration that such a man once lived.

The Mexican lumber swindlers fooled a great many people, including a few United States Senators, and they deluded the President, but not for more than 30 days.

Whether Francis Joseph is "surprisingly well" or not depends on the expectations of those who are surprised at his state of health. They might have expected to find him sick abed.

When Mr. Bryan enters the Senate all hope of passing a cloture rule will disappear, for if there is one man in the country opposed to limiting the flow of words his initials are W. J. B.

"THE DURATION OF ATTENTION"

Its Relation to Drama, Vaudeville, Moving Pictures, Novels, Short Stories, the Schools and Life. "Scatter-brains."

By WALTER PRICHARD EATON

THERE is a phrase in the textbooks on psychology, "the duration of attention," which Mr. G. M. Cohan probably never heard, but it stands for a fact which he very well understands—namely, that people can give their attention to one thing just so long, and then, no matter how interested they may be, they have simply got to relax. It may be possible that Richard Wagner understood this law also, but he made a very different estimate of the time limit of attention! If you will go to a Cohan play and watch it carefully, you will observe that no scene is prolonged much beyond five minutes; somebody then goes out or comes in, there is a change of mood, "comic relief," anything to break the suspense. In "Parsifal," on the other hand, or "Tristan," a scene is often prolonged till only the musically strongest listeners are able to keep their attention from wandering, to keep from feeling fatigue and even restlessness. How often we have been to a concert where we felt there was one number too many! It may have been a charming number, but we were musically full, we had reached the limit of the duration of attention. How often, in reading a difficult book, no matter how absorbing, we have reached a point where our minds refused to grasp the ideas, and we found ourselves rereading a paragraph a second and third time, blankly.

Sandow's 50-pound Dumb-bell

Now, as there are publics for Cohan and publics for Wagner, it is evident that this limit of the duration of attention is different in different people. There is a limit to the time that I can hold a 50-pound dumb-bell out at arm's length—a decided limit! Sandow could hold it out a considerable time. But if I should practice various muscle-building exercises long enough I, too, might be able to stand the strain a moment or two. The mind is not a muscle, and it is not so easily cultivated, but it is capable of cultivation, of course.

The whole process of our education, in fact, may be said in a sense to be directed toward increasing the duration of our attention. The small boy cannot get his lessons because he cannot "concentrate." His teacher works to give him that power. The genius who finally emerges from the technical college and invents some valuable electrical appliance does so because his mind has been trained to centre on the one problem—because his duration of attention is practically unlimited.

Conversely, it is certain that if we fail to exercise our muscles they lose their power of endurance, and if we fail to exercise our minds they lose the power of concentration.

Which brings us, by a perfectly natural train of ideas, to vaudeville and motion pictures, and to the question, "Is the American public in the theatre losing its power of sustained attention? Is the duration of attention becoming more and more contracted?"

Rapid-fire Entertainment.

One of our leading playwrights declares emphatically that it is, and he attributes the fact largely to vaudeville and the movies. Undoubtedly both these forms of entertainment are logically calculated to please the people who by nature are incapable of sustained periods of attention, at any rate. In vaudeville no act lasts much over 20 minutes—some a less time. On comes one performer—bing! he is in the middle of his act, at breakneck pace. Off he goes—bing! On comes another—and so through the evening. Similarly, in the movies, the pictures come in reels. Very often a whole drama is on one reel. Each 20 minutes, then, the drama is changed. There are consecutive dramas running into five, six, even nine reels, but they are not, as a rule, so popular as the shorter plays. And even with them there is constant motion, change, shifting of the attention. A people fed constantly on such amusement fare surely can hardly be expected to find it ideal training for an appreciation of Ibsen, let us say, with his demands on long-sustained attention!

If we look at the popular reading matter of the day, too, we find the short story reigning in every magazine, and all the novels, except De Morgan's, not more than a third or even a quarter the length of such old three-deckers as "Tom Jones" and Pendennis." Evidently in literature, as on the stage, the output is calculated to meet the demands of people whose duration of attention is shorter than of old.

The Stiffening Up Process

It is quite useless to deny that this popular demand for the rapid-fire school of drama and fiction is a serious handicap to the man who is trying to do fine, serious work either in the drama or literature. It is a terrible handicap, and the dramatic artist is perhaps the harder hit. But it is not so easy to say whether our modern weakness of attention is due to vaudeville and the movies, or the other way around. May it not be that the whole trend of our modern world, with its universal education making millions of people factors in the reading and play-going public who were once not factors, who once left the field to persons endowed by nature with greater powers of sustained attention, has something to do with the matter? May it not be that our modern city life, with its hurry, its excitement, its lack of leisure, its hundred appeals to the attention where one appeal existed a century ago, has much to do with our "scatter-brained" condition?

At any rate, we might as well face the fact that no matter how much we deplore the inability of the modern American crowd to concentrate its attention for a prolonged period, we cannot rise up and abolish vaudeville, motion pictures and the cheap fiction magazines. The way to increase the duration of attention is by education. It is by stiffening up the schools, and by giving every possible encouragement to worthy art works which do demand prolonged attention. There is no little truth in the charge that our schools at present are too soft. And it is nobody's fault but our own, surely, that our theatres have been left entirely in the hands of commercial traders whose interest it is to cater to the largest number—the largest number always being those whose powers of attention are the weakest.

APRIL IN THE SOUTH

She comes to us in balmy winds,
Sweet with the breath of spring,
Aglow with blooming daffodils,
While tuneful warblers sing;
Their notes commingling with the brook's
That dances in its mirth,
And Shine and Shower, passing by,
Make glad the waking earth.

Bedight with lovely velvet leaves,
A robe of royal green,
Adorned with apple blossoms rare,
She is the season's queen:
A dainty maiden, fresh and fair,
Unburdened yet with years,
That faces life with changeful mood,
A child of smiles and tears.

—Jake H. Harrison, in Southern Woman's Magazine.

HOW CARTY CAUGHT THE VISION

ON A hot summer day in Boston more than 35 years ago an old lady toiled up the inevitable flights of stairs which led to the telephone office of those times. Out of breath she sat down and when she had recovered sufficiently to speak she said she wanted to talk to Chicago. The operators of that time were of a type that the ethnologists would rank a little lower than wild Indians. These youngsters, or all but one, set up a great laugh; and, indeed, the absurdity of the old lady's project could hardly be overstated, because in those days Salem, 15 miles away, was then a long distance line. Considering the difficulty in getting a message even to Salem it was no wonder that the old lady's proposal was greeted with undue merriment. She wanted to talk to her son in Chicago when 15 miles was the uttermost long distance frontier.

But there was one of the operators who did not laugh. After the visitor had departed he turned and said that the day would come when Boston and Chicago would be linked by busy telephone wires. At this the others set up a laugh as loud and even more derisive than before. The boy who made this prophecy was John J. Carty, today chief engineer of the American Telegraph and Telephone Company, the man who perhaps more than any other was responsible for co-ordinating and perfecting the system which has made possible conversation from ocean to ocean. Others, it is true, have had their part, and not a small part, in the work, from Theodore N. Vail, president of the company, who said "Do it," and it was done, through the long series of inventors who have smoothed out the wrinkles in the transmission of the electric fluid across the continent. Bell and Watson and Pupin and hundreds of lesser lights have done their share, but when all is said and done we must come back to Carty. He it was who not only had the vision, but had the ability to bring this vision into the full fruition of reality.

Born in Cambridge, Mass., on April 4, 1861, Carty, after going through the Latin school with the intention of entering Harvard, found that his eyes would not enable him to pursue the scholastic course he had mapped out, and in 1879 he landed a job as switchboard operator in the Boston office, the place where we first met him. There were no electrical engineers in those days and a man had to blaze out his own trail. This he did with such success that today there is no authority anywhere in the world who will rank with Carty in his chosen field. It would be impossible within a brief space to enumerate the improvements wrought out by this man and by the corps of 500 experts who are at work under his direction at the engineering heart of the corporation in New York. Not only has he served America, but foreign Governments have recognized his skill. France calling him to lecture at the Sorbonne and the Emperor of Japan bestowing on him two decorations, the Order of the Sacred Treasure and the Order of the Rising Sun.

About six years ago Mr. Carty visited for the first time the Pacific coast. In common with all the boys of the East—so he tells the story—he had studied geography, seen pictures of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, read his Buffalo Bill, knew about the trappers and Overland Trail and of the old pioneer spirit of "Pike's Peak or Bust." He went over that trail, not on the back of a mustang but in a Pullman. In going over the route and reading and rereading the history of that westward movement he was seized, he says, with some of the old pioneer spirit, inspired by the grandeur of Mr. Vail's ideal of universal service. The railroad on which he traveled was the Union Pacific, and the fact that it was so called was suggestive to him. He was impressed with the fact that California telephonically was not in the Union.

"I was impressed," he continued, "with the fact that the Union Pacific Railroad was built for the purpose of tying that part of the country to the rest of the Union. We were not one nation until California was admitted to the Union, until it was tied up by the railroad and the telegraph. Now, telephonically, we were not one nation until we were able to talk from New York or Philadelphia or Boston to San Francisco, and the thing which I promised was that I was going to undertake nothing more or less than to go back and set to work, so far as it in me lay, all of our machinery and resources to establish telephonic communication between the Atlantic and Pacific."

CHARLES M. CHAPIN.

EASTER

EASTER IN PHILADELPHIA IN 1865

Word of the Assassination of President Lincoln Was Received on Saturday—Old Newspaper Accounts Reveal the Effect Produced on the People of This City.

EASTER Sunday, 50 years ago, promised to be a day of rejoicing over the good news that had come from Appomattox. Rejoicing there was, all through the preceding week—until Saturday. News of the assassination of President Lincoln on Friday evening, at Ford's Theatre in Washington, was not generally known to the public until Saturday morning. In the PUBLIC LEDGER of that date the principal news article was headed, "A Crime Without a Name." The leading editorial bore the same title.

Monday's issue of the PUBLIC LEDGER—there was no Sunday PUBLIC LEDGER then—described "The Nation's Loss—How the News Was Received in Philadelphia." The story, as it appears in the yellowed files, runs as follows:

Saturday Morning

"After a week of rejoicing, bordering on frenzy; after the hosannas of praise in behalf of our victorious armies, and while the whole city was ablaze with excitement over the approaching illumination to commemorate the nation's deliverance, came the sad news of the nation's loss. The sad story was known to but few on Friday night * * * but with the break of day the newsboy's cry awoke the people to a knowledge of the tragedy. It was with difficulty that men could be made to believe the story. That such an event could occur at the capital of the nation was hard to comprehend, and men and women took counsel together at early dawn, and with tearful eyes and saddened countenances prayed that there might be some mistake. Soon the people found their way to the heart of the city to learn the full extent of the tragedy. Work was suspended in workshop and factory; counting houses and brokers' offices were closed; merchants closed their stores, and everybody crowded to the newspaper offices to catch the first announcement of a possible improvement in the President's condition.

"Past political differences were forgotten in the universal sorrow, and men discussed the event as a national humiliation and shame, and not as the loss of an individual or the representative of a political party. Sadness was visible in every face, and men gathered in groups to talk with bated breath and recount the noble qualities of Mr. Lincoln and express the hope that his life would be spared to witness the final triumph of the cause which it had fallen to his lot to guide. But when the Official Gazette put at rest all hopes by announcing the death of Mr. Lincoln, the grief of the people was manifest in all directions. Strong and brave men wept as they read the news, and the gleam of rage was seen to sparkle in the eyes of the more excitable.

The Crowded Streets

"The crowd on Chestnut street grew larger minute after minute, until by 10 o'clock the thoroughfare was almost impassable. Two gentlemen conversing together were sure to attract notice and collect a crowd of listeners eager to learn the sentiments of the speakers or perhaps to gather a crumb of comfort. Business was suspended everywhere. Doors and windows were closed, and within an hour after the announcement of Mr. Lincoln's death Chestnut street was draped from every building. * * * Many of the stores, although closed for business, had the display windows opened and in them were arranged portraits of Mr. Lincoln, with suitable surroundings and groupings of the emblems of mourning. * * *

"Nor was this confined to the principal buildings or to the main streets. Everywhere the people endeavored to give some outward token of their grief. Dwellings were draped in mourning. In some places the black folds were hung from windows, over doors, or across the building. Balconies were draped, shutters bowed and craped. At a number of residences the portrait of Mr. Lincoln, heavily hung in black, was displayed at parlor windows. Everywhere the flags were at half-mast and knotted with crape. To add to the general solemnity, the State House bell commenced tolling, and in compliance with a suggestion by the Chief Engineer of the Fire Department, the engine bells also sounded the dirge. No description could do justice to the sincerity of the grief of the people, or fittingly notice the outward manifestations of sorrow. It was the saddest day known in the history of Philadelphia.

"It came to be recognized as proper, before long, that the small medallion likeness of Mr. Lincoln, so well known during the political campaign, should be worn as a token of mourning. Boys found a ready sale for the picture, and soon the familiar face of the late President was to be seen upon the coats of thousands of citizens.

"In the midst of all the gloom there was an evident desire on the part of the thoughtless to seek vent for their feelings. A victim was sought, and the slightest hint of an individual differing in sentiment with the great mass of the people was sufficient to direct a crowd in his direction. This feeling was displayed several times during the morning, and nothing but the firmness of the policemen, with the personal efforts of the Mayor, saved us the shame of an outbreak which could have accomplished no possible good. Several men who were alleged to have used language indicative of pleasure at the nation's calamity were mobbed and were only saved from violence by the exertions of the policemen. * * * An excited crowd caught one man at 6th and Chestnut streets, and a proposition to hang was made. A strong posse of policemen came to the man's rescue, and took him to the Central Station, the crowd following, crying, 'Hang him!' * * *"

Easter Sunday

"The Rev. Father McElroy, of St. Joseph's (Catholic) Church, dwelt at length on the terrible calamity that had befallen the nation in the dastard assassination of its Chief Magistrate. He denounced the crime in unmeasured terms, and drew such a vivid picture of the awful deed and its dire consequences as to make a marked impression on his hearers and affect many of them even to tears. His remarks throughout were listened to with breathless attention, and in conclusion he exhorted his hearers to offer up their fervent prayers unceasingly for the country in this her hour of deep affliction. * * *

"At the New Street Lutheran Church * * * the pastor, the Rev. E. W. Hutter, feelingly commented on the absorbing event of the day. He compared the taking away of President Lincoln at this critical juncture to the removal, by Divine command, of Moses, on the very eve of the entry of the hosts of Israel into the Promised Land. And again he compared it to the horrible martyrdom of John the Baptist, at the period of the inauguration of our holy Christianity. Both these events had been characterized by an awful and sublime mysteriousness. Neither had in the least retarded the progress and establishment of the Church. So it would be now. God's government was not dependent on any one man or class of men, however gifted, noble, or high in position."

In an editorial on the death of Lincoln and the task before the nation, the PUBLIC LEDGER said: "What our late excellent Chief Magistrate, while living, thought was just, and honorable, and right, is no less just and proper now that he is dead. Indeed the noble principles to which he devoted his life become sanctified by his death. In his clear sense and understanding the disturbing passions of the hour could not avert for one moment the steady purpose of his heart, which was the restoration of the Union to its original integrity and power; a restoration not merely in a bond of political union, but one in mutual sentiment of good-will."

EASTER THANKSGIVING

Thank God for the dear ones safe today,
Safe at home on the happy shore,
Where the smile of the Father beams for aye
And the shadow of pain shall fall no more.
Thank God for the hearts that have done with sin,
For the eyes that shall never be blind with tears;
Thank God for the beautiful, entered in,
To the perfect rest of the deathless years.

Thank God today for the pilgrim feet,
Which have trodden the last of the toilsome way;
For the strong, for the frail, for the babes so sweet,
Who have left forever this crumbling clay;
Who have changed earth's trial and loss and moan,
For the victor's palm and the voice of praise,
Who dwell in the light of the great white Throne,
And join in the songs which the ransomed raise.

Thank God today for the hope sublime,
Which fills our souls in the darkest hours;
Thank God that the transient cares of time
Are wreathed in the glory of fadeless flowers.
Thank God for the rift in the desolate grave;
'Tis the soldier's couch, not the captive's prison;
He hallowed its portal, who died to save,
And we write o'er its arch, "The Lord is risen.

—Margaret F. Sangster.

THE CRIME OF THE ROSE

To the Editor of the Evening Ledger:

Sir—I cannot help Benjamin West, who asks about the color of the American Beauty rose, for I have hated the flower and never sought to know what it looks like ever since I heard that John D. Rockefeller, Jr., said that in order to develop the blossom to its greater perfection it was necessary to nip off all but one of the buds on the plant and send all its strength into the remaining bud. Such frustration of the plain intent of nature is criminal.

ANGELINA PERKINS.

Bryn Mawr, April 2.