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MURDER BY "BEVERAGE"

BY A Pennsylvania statute of 1794, still in force, killing by poison is included among the forms of first-degree murder. First-degree murder is defined in both American and English jurisprudence as "killing a human being with malice aforethought, express or implied."

Malice aforethought has been comprehensively defined in this commonwealth. In 1905 the court in the case of the Commonwealth vs. Sigler declared that, among other things, malice aforethought means "knowledge that the act done is likely to produce grievous bodily harm or kill, whether coupled with intention to produce them or not."

The seller of alleged beverages containing the poison of wood alcohol is a first-degree murderer if he is aware of the presence of this ingredient and of its deadly properties.

During the week which ended Saturday sixty-seven deaths occurred in various parts of the country from the effects of drinking wood alcohol. Several victims of the poison in this city are in a critical condition. Punishment for these tragedies is available through channels of justice in existence centuries before there was ever a prohibition movement.

It is unnecessary in this state to rely upon the federal district attorney. Power to halt this wanton and reckless sacrifice of human life is vested also in Samuel P. Rotan. The laws of Pennsylvania on this subject are absolutely specific. The state has a new breed of murderers on its hands. Riddance of them can be legally attained by the electric chair.

A CITY HALL DRAMA BILLED

PRESUMABLY, in this instance, poetic justice will not be balked. It is intimated that Councilmen-elect William E. Finley and Joseph P. Gaffney will be able to spare to the Brothers Vore a couple of tickets for the inauguration of J. Hampton Moore.

This is as it should be. These formerly influential gentlemen may thus attend the exercises if they wish or they can imitate John Adams, who rode away from the White House without so much as a peep at or a handshake for his successor, Thomas Jefferson.

This precedent, however, is not encouraging. The public has a way of remembering exhibitions of piety with a peculiar and lasting edge. But, on the other hand, if the brothers show up, as they probably will, that scene, too, is not likely to be forgotten.

There are possibilities for first-rate drama, though chiefly of the ruminating and introspective variety, in the prospect. Art might have something to say about it, also. That fellow who wanders in little serial sketches what certain people are thinking about has here a capital subject.

All in all, it looks as though January 5 were going to be rather a tense day in this vicinity. What were those touching lines of Wolsey's about falling like What's-his-name, never to hope again?

A JOB FOR SPROULE

BOSTON'S new drydock, long enough to accommodate the biggest ship afloat and with thirty-five feet of water over the sill, is now in commission. Big ships which enter the port of Philadelphia have to go somewhere else when they need drydocking. This happened during the war when a ship brought a cargo here and would have taken a cargo away if it had been possible to drydock the vessel for necessary repairs. As it was the ship went to New York, was repaired there, took on a cargo and sailed from that port.

Mr. Sproule, the new director of wharves, docks and ferries, understands the conditions, and he knows as well as any one that without a drydock of the proper size this port will be handicapped in its competition for business. If he can bring about the construction of an adequate drydock during his term of office he will earn the gratitude of every one interested in the development of the city.

In the meantime some one at the Board of Trade luncheon this afternoon may be bold enough to say why the drydock was not built long ago.

BUILDING GOES ON

DURING the last eleven months of this year the value of contracts let for building and construction work is about double the amount of the average for the corresponding period for the last ten years.

This does not indicate that since the armistice was signed more building has been contracted for than in preceding periods, for the cost of construction has increased to such an extent that a comparison of price totals does not give any proper basis for comparing the total amount of construction. Yet the figures encouraging, for they do indicate

that notwithstanding the high prices for labor and material business men are going ahead with their affairs.

Building operations now in progress are not for investment but to provide for the expansion of business enterprises which have outgrown their old quarters. Prices must come down or rentals must be put into houses to be let. If the present high level of prices is to continue for several years, as many persons believe, some effort must be made in Philadelphia and in all other large cities to provide suitable homes for those at present seeking them in vain.

A LONG STEP TOWARD STRIKE SUBSTITUTES

Plans for a National Industrial Tribunal Rest on the Knowledge That Justice Cannot Survive Daylight

BROADLY viewed, the tentative plans of the latest of Mr. Wilson's industrial conferences would provide what might be called jury trial for the disputes and disagreements that now lead to strikes, lockouts and general unrest.

The jury that the conference seems to have in mind is the general public. The supreme industrial tribunal of nine about which the whole scheme revolves could be little more than a high interpreter of the facts in given cases.

Mr. Hoover, Secretary Wilson, Mr. Wickkersham and their associates desire, in a word, to provide for the settlement of industrial controversy machinery as dignified and as efficient as that which the courts have always provided for the adjustment of the far less important private squabbles that rise between individuals.

No one can say that their view is not logical and humane. The method suggested is devised primarily to keep the facts and factors in every discussion open to the light and to public scrutiny at every turn after a dispute begins to take on dangerous aspects.

The scheme is sketchy in its present form. The conference acted with tact in formulating its plan and presenting it to the country for general discussion and criticism before continuing further with the work assigned to it.

At first glance it must appear that there is a fatal error in the form proposed for the tribunal suggested as the supreme court for labor troubles.

This board is intended to include three representatives of labor, three representatives of the employers' groups and three representatives of the public, to be named by the President and ratified by the Senate. More properly the Supreme Court of the United States might be the model for an industrial tribunal of the sort proposed and, as we all know, the Supreme Court is not made up of special delegations representative of opposed interests. It is not infected with class consciousness.

At the outset it must appear that the unanimous decisions required to make the findings of the proposed industrial tribunal final and binding would be no easier to reach in a pinch than was unanimous action in the industrial conference which, similarly constituted, was wrecked upon the rock of class feeling a few months ago to make way for the newer group which is now struggling with the task that its predecessor couldn't perform.

It appears, then, that the present industrial conference is still thinking in terms of conciliation and depending chiefly upon the force of public opinion which the hearings and the reports of its tribunal would arouse and upon the wholesome effects of daylight in the dark places of the industrial system. It is seeking to have the service of trained and even technical minds in its high court of appeal.

There may be wisdom in that aim. But anybody who has watched the course of recent industrial disputes knows that labor men and employers' representatives alike find it difficult to sit upon their prejudices even when they fit upon what is supposed to be impartial boards.

The tribunal of nine could unquestionably enlighten the country by means of minority and majority reports. But decisions of the sort which would be binding under present or future laws because they were unanimous would be, in all probability, extremely rare.

An industrial tribunal is necessary. It is quite as necessary as the Supreme Court. But it should be a tribunal composed of impartial men, free from special interest and concerned only with the peace and welfare of the country and the prosperity of its people and its industries.

Such a tribunal should be an arbiter in the name of society. Then its decisions could not be questioned, and it would receive ready support from Congress and from the people.

Technical knowledge is necessary for the just settlement of many of the problems that are being made only more acute by strikes and violence. But a court ordinarily depends on witnesses to supply that knowledge. Judges are not expected to provide it unaided.

The general provisions of the plan offered today for the consideration of the country are promising. This first report from a group which faces a long neglected and complicated task has a wholesome sound. The conference is pioneering over virgin ground and it is going slowly to avoid pitfalls.

The suggestion that regional industrial boards operating within the boundaries suggested by the twelve federal reserve districts be established to deal with and settle labor troubles in their early stages is inspired, in all probability, by the excellent work of the war labor board, which found that an intelligent and fair approach to any minor dispute insured a peaceful and satisfactory settlement in the vast majority of instances. Under the plan now suggested employers and employees would be forced to sit down calmly and talk over their disagreements before making appeals to the higher tribunal at Washington.

The great virtue of such an arrangement is that it ought to make strikes unnecessary. So long as the workers' organizations know that their demands are being fairly investigated and so long as there remains a high court of appeal established in the name of peace and justice, proposals for a strike could come

only from malignant agitators who want something more than justice.

The machinery suggested for the regional boards is an elaboration of that set up by President Roosevelt for the settlement of the anthracite strike in Pennsylvania.

In suggesting that such machinery be made permanent and in formally proposing what is at least the forerunner of a supreme court of industry, the industrial conference has taken a long flight into new realms of economic thought. But it has not gone too far. The record of the last few years shows that a substitute will have to be found for strikes and found soon.

PREPARE TO BE COUNTED

THE enumeration of the population of Philadelphia for the fourteenth decennial census will begin Friday.

Householders are expected to be prepared with all the data sought by the enumerators. They will be asked whether they are white or black, male or female, native or foreign, how many children they have, what their ages and the state of their education, whether they own their own home or rent it, and a lot of other things which the director of the census thinks should be known in order that the statisticians may find out the state of the population.

When the population figures are compiled the cities which have been boasting of an enormous increase in population will learn whether they have been drawing the long bow. Cleveland, for example, expects to have it disclosed that it has grown from 560,000 in 1910 to 1,000,000 in 1920 and has risen to the rank of fourth city in the Union, held by St. Louis in 1910. Detroit, however, is just now disputing that title with Cleveland.

Many Philadelphians expect that the enumeration will show that this city has a population of 2,000,000 and will hold its place as the third city. Indeed, there is no possibility that it can lose that place, for it had 1,000,000 greater population than the next city in 1910.

KAIGHN'S POINT FERRY

THE Reading Railway Company ought to rebuild the Kaighn avenue ferryhouse in Camden to replace the temporary structure.

The Camden authorities are applying such pressure as they can to the railway company. There was some excuse for postponing the work while the war was in progress, but that excuse has long ceased to be valid. The projected bridge across the Delaware river will not serve the terminal of the Reading, for its Camden exit will be a long way from Kaighn avenue. The ferry accommodates a large number of people of both cities. It goes without saying that proper facilities should be provided in Camden.

Americanizing the Aliens

Two state mining secretaries will be appointed by the Industrial Y. M. C. A. for the West Virginia coal fields, and the secretaries will be permitted to secure the services of song leaders and women workers for the various huts. There is big and useful work ahead of them. Democracy is less readily learned from textbooks than from social centers intelligently run.

The Goat as Usual

The Federation of Labor and will demand an eight-hour day. This will mean an increase in cost of 33 1/3 per cent. And the man who is not rich enough to afford the service and not poor enough to have it given to him will be the sufferer.

Stuff With a Kick

Disdaining the contents of the old wooden bucket, dipomaniacs are treasuring it nevertheless for the wood alcohol it may contain. Those who on a time rushed the bucket are now kicking it.

Fight Inciters

The duel in Little Italy which may cost two men their lives causes one to wonder if Love has really lost his running mate, Ligor.

The train of thought

The train of thought started in the minds of housewives by the contemplation of the list of prices compiled by the women's fair-price commission cannot, of course, be expected to run on schedule.

Wonder if the fur manufacturers

charged with not making proper returns in connection with the federal income tax neglected to mention some visits from local bandits?

If a ship carries the American flag

the song will have to be revised to run: "Yo, ho, ho, and a bottle of grape-juice!"

Nineteen nineteen has about lost its

chance to be remembered as the year in which the peace treaty was finally ratified.

Perhaps we won't be able to beat all

other nations in the world at the export game, but we have the Edge.

The fate of Turkey is still on the knees

of the gods, which suggests that the gods should transfer it to their toes.

FAR AFIELD FOR WATER

Philadelphia's Needs Demand Avoidance of Stream Pollution and Upper Delaware is as Yet Free From Contamination

By GEORGE NOX McCAIN
THE necessity of safeguarding Philadelphia's water supply is becoming every year a question of vital and paramount interest to the future. It is the opinion of experts that ultimately the city will be compelled to go far afield for its supply.

In this connection my friend William B. McCabe, general superintendent of the Pennsylvania Railroad Water Companies, directs attention to the necessity of avoiding stream pollution in the state as an equally vital problem.

It is a question that has forced itself to the front only during the last quarter of a century, and as Mr. McCabe points out there are a number of streams in Pennsylvania that have been rendered practically useless through industrial and coal mining pollution.

The coal mining pollution of streams is confined largely to the western part of the state where the Youghiogheny, Conemaugh and Kiskiminetas are fair samples; though the Lehigh is an eastern sufferer in this respect.

Industrial pollution is a more difficult proposition to contend with, and is certain to increase, unless greater attention is given to its prevention.

The upper Delaware is generally regarded as the region from which Philadelphia's future water supply must come. As yet its watershed has suffered but little, if any, from pollution except such as might be expected in a territory of that character. As yet it is comparatively free from this danger.

Mr. McCabe directs attention to the fact that the first act of assembly for the protection of water supply was passed in 1828 to preserve the Fairmount dam, which supplies Philadelphia, from contamination and pollution of its waters.

C. S. OSMOND has shipped thousands of Philadelphia's representatives of a great transatlantic shipping corporation. The world war put a pretty bad crimp in shipping activities, although business between here and European ports is beginning to assume the position it occupied prior to 1916.

Mr. Osmond tells me there are two things which militate against the resumption of transatlantic passenger traffic, the lack of ships and the passport regulations. Every passenger steamer that leaves American shores for European ports is full complemented of voyagers notwithstanding, and this will be increased as fast as additional vessels can be placed in the trade, and passport regulations relaxed; particularly the latter.

Nobody much goes abroad nowadays except business people, army or navy officers, those engaged in after-war relief movements and aliens anxious to revisit their former homes in the war zone.

Tourist and steamship agencies are exceedingly optimistic about the future and are planning for a great rush as soon as conditions of travel on the ocean and abroad reach the normal. This, he believes, will be reached during midsummer of the coming year.

From the number of business men and American representatives of manufacturers and exporters who have been going abroad in the last six months," said Mr. Osmond, "I have the impression that this country is not going to be left when it comes to picking up a big share of foreign business. We have never experienced anything like it; though possibly this may be due to the fact that it is so particularly noticeable this year."

Mr. Osmond does not anticipate any reduction in the cost of ocean travel for some time to come. Rates will remain about as they are as long as the cost of transportation keeps up.

Thousands of foreigners who have lived in this country during the war period have gone abroad, but they are eager to return and are writing their friends in this country to stay here and not think of returning to their former homes, where conditions, made so by the war, are almost intolerable.

A. B. ROSS, lawyer, publicist, who, during the operation of the federal food administration in Pennsylvania established curb markets in Philadelphia and over the state, is having the time of his life devising some age-old theories on the subject of farm fertilization.

Mr. Ross tells me, as the result of his investigation, he has discovered that our entire system of crop fertilization is at fault; that the loss in crop values and waste of fertilizer amounts annually to hundreds of millions of dollars.

He has got farmers, agricultural experimental station managers and fertilizer manufacturers all over the country in his hair as a result of his publications on the subject. As he is a gentleman of pronounced convictions this fact does not cause him any worry.

It is a condition, he says, which can be easily remedied. It involves, however, a complete reversal of present practices in the manufacture and application of fertilizer on the farm.

Under the present system, and both farmers and scientific agriculturists are to blame, commercial fertilizers are applied to the soil on the theory that certain chemical ingredients are permanent in the soil and that it is only necessary to add those which crop rotation annually diminishes.

Thus, it is taken for granted that, as a rule, there is a certain amount of potash in the soil and it is only necessary to supply other chemicals needed in the production of crops.

This is an error. What vegetation needs, according to Mr. Ross, is a balanced ration of chemical fertilizer without reference to soil ingredients, until such time as experience and experiment necessarily indicate changes.

It is Mr. Ross's theory that vegetable life is the same as animal life. That cows, sheep, horses, poultry and even the human animal require a balanced ration, and so do plants, vegetables and cereals.

Meaning Mr. Ross is receiving letters from all over the country telling him where he is wrong.

LOOKS LIKE A DARNED GOOD EFFORT, ANYHOW



THE CHAFFING DISH

First of the New Year Poems

WHAT are the days that still lie hid Within the casket of the year? None know, and while Hope lifts the lid My palaces of dream I rear.

THEN let this be a New Year's prayer: For every Dream a Day be found, And may all Castles in the Air Find firm foundation on the ground! SIMON SIMOLEON.

We Should Dear Societes—Should not the following make M. V. N. S. less pessimistic? Our world is so free from a number of drinks I'm sure we should all be exemplary drinkers. DAVID ABBEEL.

Our Snow Maid The snow packed splendidly this week: We made a snow-girl out of it. To have her very up-to-date We rouged her chilly cheeks with "R.U." M. V. N. S.

An Ungrateful Protest Dear Societes—May a submerged bard, revelling grossly in his unimportance, ask what you mean by the unspicable outrage of bracketing his monumentally minor contributions to your Dish with those of the Parussians? I would have you know, sir, that there is an aristocracy of intellectuality that resents this; just as the seasoned Sergeant-Major would fustily hurl if you addressed him as "Lieutenant." Yet you have the face to put me on your football line-up (I never played anything but tennis, parchesi and pitch) and to insinuate with disgusting adulation that I am a brother under the skin of the cruddle Helton, the starbly Bellem, the cosmic Leventrons and the ineffable McFee. I consider it in especially faulty taste, as I have just wearily completed a review of your "Mince Pie" for a rival rag, in which I do not suggest that you, Doctor Johnson, Euripides and Lord Alfred Douglas are all fatrilly writers. Yours in mournful rage, RICHARD DESSMOND.

In honor of the fact that General Horace Hook has just marched under our windows to be mustered out with the Home-Defense Guards, we print the following which we have long been holding in our vaults: My Farm (With due apologies) IT LIES among the unnumbered ways. As peaceful as a dove; A farm that I was wont to praise, And one that I did love.

"ALLED my farm 'The Mossy Stone,' Because its meadows lie Beneath moss-covered rocks, and one Lifts bowlders to the sky.

CROPS were unknown they would not grow. So now my farm must be a field of weeds, and one A third time mowed—and oh! The difference to me? HORACE HOOK.

Our Annual Desk-Cleaning INASMUCH as it is our habit to share our joys with our kind-hearted clients, it seems to us only just that they should partake of our sorrows also. Therefore we propose to take them with us on our annual desk-cleaning expedition, in which we endeavor to sweep and garish, making our paths straight for the New Year. With unflinching courage we shall lay bare our infirmities, realizing that nothing conduces so surely to human complacency as the contemplation of the errors of others.

Among our papers we find the following: Two notebooks full of poems by our friend Pete Sepechenko. Pete, who works on a farm up in Ottville, Bucks county, has the right idea about writing poetry, for he likes to imagine himself very miserable when he is really having a jovial time. His masterpiece is a savage soliloquy representing his

THE MOTH

IS LED in the midnight air, Masked with the dark's faint bloom, Out into glooming and secret haunts 'The flame cries, 'Come!'

Lovely in eye and fan, A-tremble in shimmering grace, A moth from her winter swoon 'Uplifts her face:

Stares from her glamorous eyes: Wafts her on plumes like mist; In ecstasy swirls and sways To her strange tryst, Walter De La Mare in Westminster Gazette.

D'Annunzio seems to illustrate the fact that patriotic genius is to autocratic madness near allied.

It is understood that New Jersey's campaign against the Reds specifically excludes the wine that is red and old Red Eye.

The good ship Daniels appears to have sprung a leak. A. W. O. L.—The Dollar of Our Dadies.

What Do You Know?

QUIZ

- 1. When is the next president of France to be elected?
2. Who was Sarah Siddons?
3. Name two plays by Gabriele D'Annunzio.
4. What does the United States shipping board contemplate doing with the former German liners now in its possession?
5. What is the salary of the chief justice of the United States?
6. Who is governor of Porto Rico?
7. What political party has never had a President die in office.
8. What is the plural of gladiolus?
9. From what is the name Santa Claus derived?
10. What is a spadilla?

Answers to Saturday's Quiz

- 1. It has been announced that the railroads will be returned to private ownership on March 1.
2. The spire of a church is a slender spire, especially at the intersection of the nave and transept.
3. The word chore is a corruption of chore or char, the original meaning of which is work by the day at house-cleaning or odd jobs. Char, preserved in charwoman, is derived from the Old English, "ceor, ceeran," meaning turf.
4. The Bridge of Sighs connects the palace of the Doges with the old state prison of Venice. Over it the state prisoners were conveyed from the judgment hall to the place of execution, which fact makes the metaphorical name obvious in application.
5. "Mrs. Mary Smith, nee Jones," means "Mrs. Mary Smith, born Jones." Nee simply means born and is the feminine past participle of the French verb "naître," to be born.
6. The Canary Islands lie in the Atlantic ocean, northwest of the African coast, in about latitude 27 north, longitude 13 west.
7. Kei Hara is premier of Japan.
8. The mean heat of the body is between 98 and 99 degrees.
9. Vermont celebrates August 16, the anniversary of the battle of Bennington, as a legal holiday. On that date in 1777, the Americans under Stark defeated the British under Gault and Breyman.
10. John Adams was the longest lived of the American Presidents, dying on July 4, 1826, at the age of ninety years, eight months and five days.

When Jack Frost takes office most of the plums go to the plumbler.