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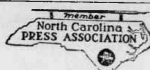
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DRUNKEN DRIVERS DANGEROUS

Thousands of good people will be killed on the highways of the United States before the year 1940 ends.

There seems to be little public indignation over the slaughter. The average automobile driver, acquainted with the natural hazards of the road, hesitates to incite drastic penalties through the fear that some unavoidable catastrophe will land him in the hoose-gow.

There was a time when high speeds were blamed for most of the accidents but the years have produced better cars and higher speeds. What would have been criminal carelessness in the twenties is considered reasonably safe in the forties and twenty years from now the dangerous speeds of today may be routine.

There are certain recognized criminal acts in connection with motor vehicles, however, that will continue to be condemned. Driving an automobile under the influence of alcohol is an example. It is dangerous, not only to the driver but to all who use the highway. It should be severely punished and yet, in many instances, convictions are hard to secure and punishment is avoided.

The drunks are public enemies when operating automobiles and should be "persuaded" to let others drive in peace. Just because "nice people" sometimes commit this offense is no reason to encourage the habit. It is a crime and should be promptly punished as a crime. To do this will save some lives in 1940.

FARM BENEFITS TO CONTINUE

The President's budget message does not recommend continuation of the present benefits being paid to the farmers of the nation. This has aroused some of the congressmen from farm areas, who insist that agricultural benefits be maintained at their present level.

This brings to mind the insistent agitation of Secretary Wallace that some method be adopted to provide funds for farm payments outside of the Federal treasury. Whether there will be a form of the abandoned processing taxes, or some other method of raising funds, is uncertain. No new taxes are expected this year but farm benefits will continue and new taxes will come later if necessary.

FACTS ON LABELS

Since the first of the New Year all foods, drugs and cosmetics, moving in interstate commerce, have been required to bear labels listing all the ingredients they contain.

"The contents" must be stated in plain English that the average housewife can understand. If any habit-forming drug is included a warning must be printed on the package.

The revised regulations as to foods and drugs are necessary in the interest of the public. They may lead to wiser buying and they should result in the purchaser getting more for his, or her, money.

There will be those to denounce the regulations as an infraction upon the individual right of every American to buy what he pleases. The real objection will come from those who want to sell cheap stuff at a fancy price and under a different name.

We foresee a great era for Marion, but it will come through the cooperative efforts of our people and not from outside sources.

Why not make up your mind to do something every day to improve yourself; it will pay dividends.

Is there no other ambition for a community than to aspire to be the largest in population.

Marion has its faults, no doubt, but why not look out for the good points.

GOOD HEALTH AND A "DISGRACE"

The health of the people of the United States in 1938 was very good, apparently, because the death rate for the year was 10.6 per 1,000 persons, as compared with 11.2 in 1937 and 10.7 in 1933, heretofore the lowest on record.

While this is encouraging Dr. Thomas Parran, surgeon general, warns that the public should not be lulled into false security because the figures do not reflect the great losses incident to protracted disability from certain diseases nor the "shocking increments of sickness and suffering resultant from lack of medical care and the thousands of non-fatal cases or preventable illness.

Dr. Parran calls attention to the 14,939 cases of smallpox in 1938 and the 8,273 cases in the first half of 1939, terming them "a national disgrace." Since 1930, when about 5,000 cases were reported, the incidence of the disease has increased until today only one country in the world, India, has a higher incidence.

Encouraging is the fact that, 1938 infant mortality, 50.9 per 1,000, is termed probably the lowest in the nation's history.

VISION OF SPRING

Just when the mercury, in northern latitudes, curls up in its shell at the bottom of the tube, scarcely lifting a timid head above the silver bulb, the seed merchants send out their gorgeous announcements, promising spring and summer. In yellow, red and purple, we are told what awaits us if we are patient and lay our plans well.

These gentry live in that ideal country where frost never comes, and plants that know no enemies bloom in January, producing perfect flowers on which the worm has not fed, which mildew has not corrupted, untouched by blight. In the dead of winter they present us with these visions, and inform us that for small sums, and with very little care on our part, we can ourselves possess these wonders of nature and art. And we like to believe it, though in past springs and summers, due to too much heat, moisture or fertilizer, we have missed the ideal crop which the catalog displays.

Be ye blessed, seed merchants who have made the lowly zinnia blossom like chrysanthemum, magnified the modern sweet pea to giant size, redoubled the nasturtium and given it a pleasant odor; who, as we watch the coal pile dwindle and the ash pile grow, send us these harbingers of a season when even the lightest underwear is a torment. Yes, we shall try again to make our gardens like unto the covers of your booklets. Hope springs eternal, and in these dead days ye have given ours a wonderful fillip.

WHAT IS A BOY

What is a boy? He is the person who is going to carry on what you have started. He is to sit right where you are sitting and attend to those things you think are so important when you are gone. You may adopt all the policies you please, but how they will be carried on depends on him. Even if you make leagues and treaties, he will have to manage them. He is going to sit at your desk in the Senate and occupy your place on the Supreme Bench. He is going to move in and take over your prisons, churches and corporations. When you get done, all your work is going to be judged and praised or condemned by him.

Your reputation and your fortune are in his hands. He will read the books you write and sell them to the second-hand man. He will assume control of your cities. Right now the future President is playing marbles, and the most famous actor of his day is complaining because he does not want to go to bed. Not your contemporaries and fellow citizens, but the boys out there in the school yard, are going to say whether after all you were a grand and noble hero or blathersake.

It is the boy who will amend your rules, after your creeds laugh at your mistakes. He may think kingly of you and say you did the best you could, or he may not. Watch your step. All your work is for him and the fate of the nation and of humanity is in his hands. So it might be well to pay him some attention.—Dr. Frank Crane, Watchman Examiner.

WEEKLY MEDITATION

By Rev. Paul A. Boriack, B. D.,
Pastor St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Marion, N. C.

Lawlessness has become one of the most serious problems of American life, was the assertion made by Dr. Muking Mehus, President of State Teachers College at Winona, Minn., in a recent address. In support of his claim he quoted these pertinent statistics. There are an estimated four million criminals in our country today. One-third of these are under 25 years of age at 700,000 under 21 years of age. At present the average age of the criminal is 23 years, nine years ago it was 26 years, and 24 years ago it was 34. The largest age group of criminals is 19 and the second largest 18. What a horrible story that tells about the natural depravity of mankind even from youth on up. The Bible says: the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. Life proves it. Why does the above situation among the youth of our land prevail?

In his Lutheran Hour Dr. Walter A. Maier of January 14th remarked: Three out of four American children are growing up without adequate religious instruction. The consequence of this lack of spiritual guidance has brought to the third generation in the United States, the Lutheran theologian declared, "a dwindling sense of moral responsibility, an unmistakable growth in juvenile delinquency, and the tragic failure of almost 75 per cent of the people to attend church regularly."

The eloquent speaker most forcefully pointed out that "education in morals rather than in mechanics, rather than in classics," should be the slogan of our American people. And to accomplish this religion is the supreme subject. However, in this choice of religion the American people must be very careful.

Far from being the best in man, religion may be the worst thing he has. It is his religion that degrades the Hindu and the Nigerian. It is her religion that makes the Hindu mother throw her child into the "holly river" Ganges and the Nigerian mother to murder her twins. All the vileness, degradation, and the daily terror that haunt the pagan are the result of his religion. Religion may be the best thing, it may be the worst; it may be a source of heavenly blessings, it may be a curse. Let the American people never forget: "The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sins" and "the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth in Him."

CHURCH APPOINTMENTS

Rev. J. C. Story announces third Sunday appointments as follows:

11 a. m. West Marion Presbyterian church.

3 p. m. Landis Chapel.

7:30 p. m. Conley Memorial Presbyterian church.

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