

**A PATROL SYSTEM FOR COUNTRY DISTRICTS.**

**A Suggestion that Deserves Careful Attention—How it Should Decrease Crime.**

It is not often that the Philadelphia Press is able to make a suggestion of value to the South. It has done so signally, however, in an editorial referring to the lynching of the negro White in Delaware. It went to the root of the matter when it said that the lynching was possible because Delaware, like other States, had neglected its duty to keep the peace. It added:

The country road is not safe to women in many parts of the country. This was true in Delaware. It is true in many counties in this State, noticeably along our great railroad lines, though not through their fault.

The human wolf is always abroad. Sometimes he is a negro and sometimes a white man. In either case our States make no provision to defend the highway against him. Offenses like that for which this man was lynched are rare on the sequestered unbuild roads every city has, because its highways are patrolled by police.

Women in the countryside and on the country highway have a right to the same protection as their sisters in the city. A mounted rural police should network rural highways. It should be paid by the State, through a tax on property, an impost most of which the cities would pay. If Delaware had taxed its corporations and city property, with a fair relative tax on farms, to provide a rural police and keep the roads safe, this crime would never have been committed. It is because the State leaves its rural highways lawless and undefended against the human wolf that lawless mobs take the law into their own hands. Make the roads safe to women by a State rural police which relieves the countryside of the hideous horror which now overshadows it for all lonely women, and lynching would disappear.

Our States neglect this duty. They neglect another. This particular human wolf had served a term for this offense. No man ought to leave a State prison after a conviction for this offense or its attempt until the prison surgeon had made it impossible to repeat offense or attempt. The way to prevent lawlessness in the mob is to prevent lawlessness in the criminal. Begin there and the mob will never be heard from.

Our laws instead let these things drift. The roads are not safe for lack of a rural police. A human wolf like this man, twice convicted for lawless violence and once for a similar crime, was turned loose, unmarked and uncorrected, to return to his crime. Peril to its women no community will long endure without outbreak; but the remedy for this lawless peril is not more lawlessness, but more law.

Our States, most of all States like Delaware and Pennsylvania, across which the imbruted of both colors

wander as tramps, vagrants and semi-criminals, need a rural mounted police patrolling the country highway. If the States keep the peace the mob will, too. The States need also a sharper edge and a heavier hand for the tramp and vagrant. A man of this class and habit convicted of violent crime should be kept under watch all his life. If his crime be of this character, or even if it be attempted, he should never be left able to repeat it.

This policy, persisted in, would end lynching by removing its cause. Nothing else will. A rural police which rounded up tramps and vagrants at sight would soon rid our country roads and lanes of the terror and horror that now broods over them for women, and out of this terror and horror, when crimes come, mobs grow.

In all of that is the wisest sort of suggestion for the South. If a rural police is such a pressing necessity for the protection of women from the human wolf in Pennsylvania, where the population averages 140 to the square mile, and in Delaware, where it averages 94, how much more pressing must it be in such States as Florida, with less than 10 persons to the square mile, as Texas with 11, as Arkansas with 24, as Alabama with 35, or as Georgia with 37 persons to the square mile?

Thinking men have long ago reached the conclusion that a revival in modified form to meet changed conditions of the old patrol system is essential to the well-being not only of the South, but of other portions of the country, and an attempt to meet the exigency was made in a bill introduced last fall by Mr. R. B. Blackburn in the Georgia Legislature providing for the establishment of a State patrol force of probably 10,000 men. Mr. Blackburn set forth at the time in the Manufacturers' Record the features of the bill, which, put into effect, would undoubtedly have proved a deterrent of crime and misdemeanors costly to the State, and also the means for the prompt administration of the law to a saving for the taxpayers and for the suppression of vagrancy, the parent of so many ills in the rural districts. That bill, we believe, is still on the table of the Georgia house of representatives. It should be taken therefrom and promptly passed as an incentive to other Southern States and to the rest of the country to take the proper steps for the betterment of rural conditions, and especially for the protection of women from the prowling wolves.—Manufacturers' Record.

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When a lightning rod agent tempts you, tell him you don't believe in rods, are afraid of them, have no fear of lightning, believe in predestination and trust in Providence, and if he still insists, offer to swap him a bull for the rod on condition he catches the bull, but don't sign his notes.—Southern Farmer.

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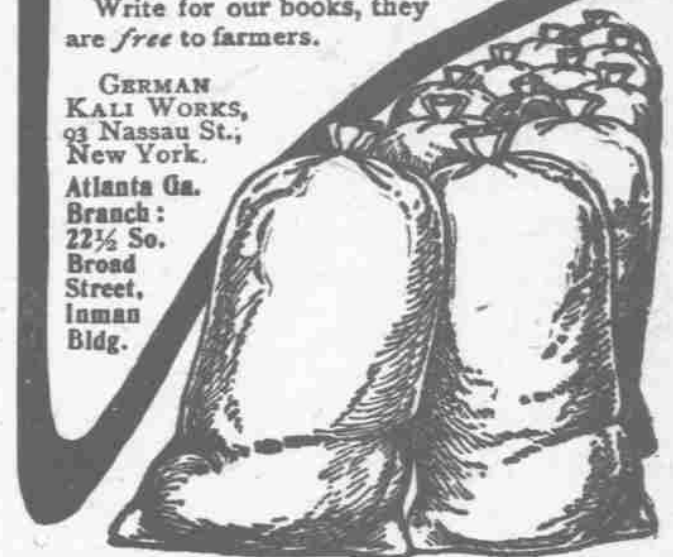
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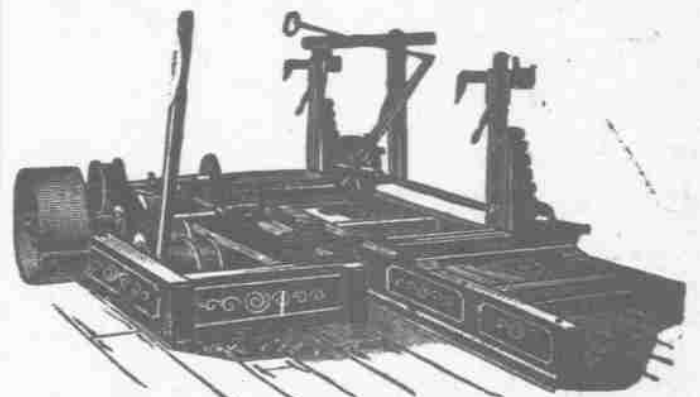


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