

Abolishing Death Penalty Is Not Religious, But Practical Problem

(By Sir Basil Thomson, K. C. B., formerly head of Scotland Yard and Chief Commissioner of Police, written specially for INS and London "Daily News.")

London.—The question of maintaining capital punishment for wilful murder ought to be considered not in terms of religious or humanitarian sentiment, but from the practical standpoint—whether murders would increase if murderers were sent to penal servitude for life.

It is very interesting to read the arguments of those who were opposed to the abolition of capital punishment for all felonies, except murder, one hundred years ago. There would be, they said, an enormous increase in felonies, just as those who advocate the "lertalions" for murderers are saying today.

Prophets All Wrong Like all these prophets, they were wrong, and if we may judge from the stultification of every prediction on social changes in the past, the abolition of capital punishment in this country would not be followed by the smallest increase in the number of murders. For it is not the severity of punishment which counts with criminals, but its certainty.

When Romilly said that the English criminal law was written in letters of blood, the police were inefficient; and there was more than a sporting chance that a man might spend a lifetime in committing crimes without being found out.

The old law that hanged a man for theft did certainly reduce the number of professional criminals, though that defence for it was not advanced by any of its apologists. Even while the death penalty for theft was still in force its incidence was uncertain, for looking through Assize calendars of the early nineteenth century we find an increasing number of death sentences commuted to transportation, until, by the year 1820, the execution of a condemned man was the exception rather than the rule. The object aimed at in those days was to terrorize people into good behaviour.

Effect Of Severity It is only when crimes far exceed the number of arrests that one finds sentences becoming increasingly severe. Their very severity may err in the wrong direction. The human animal is so curiously constituted that the idle, washing youths who look to highway robbery actually enjoyed the adulation of the mob as they were being driven to Tyburn, and in that theatrical intoxication seemed to forget what they were to suffer.

It is a curious reflection that the abolition of public executions has more probably prolonged capital punishment in England, for in these softer days modern humanitarianism would have been stirred to its depths by sensational accounts of public executions in the newspapers.

The practical arguments against abolishing capital punishment are—first, that it is a deterrent; second, there are from time to time murderers of so callous and brutal a type who stir the public sense of justice to such an extent that lynch law may be resorted to. Judge Lynch still lingers in the

United States, but that is because of the interminable delays and the uncertainty of arrest and conviction which still prevail in some of the States of the Union.

Few Executions The number of executions in England rarely exceeds ten out of a population of 40,000,000 and it is quite likely that juries of the twentieth century, like juries of the eighteenth, shrink from their plain duty, when they think that a verdict of "Guilty" may send a fellow-creature into Eternity.

When we hang a man we do not know what punishment we are inflicting. We do know that the men who are relieved though they may have committed murders quite as heinous as those for which other men go to the gallows, are far from being the worst criminals in our prisons.

In spite of the establishment of the Court of Criminal Appeal, the responsibility of advising an executive officer—the Home Secretary. It does not seem fair that an executive officer should be called upon to act as a super-court of appeal to bridge the vast gulf which lies between death and a life sentence of penal servitude. This power of reprieve might be used experimentally as a test before legislation is resorted to.

All condemned men might automatically be reprieved until we see whether murders increase.

Cherryville Wants On Road To Toluca

Gastonia Gazette.

At a largely attended dinner given in the New Central hotel at Cherryville Thursday night by the Cherryville Chamber of Commerce that organization had as its guests members of the board of county commissioners and a number of citizens of the other townships.

Mr. David P. Dellinger was toastmaster and welcomed the visitors, outlining the project for which the Cherryville chamber is seeking the support and co-operation of the county officials and citizens of all parts of the county. It is the purpose of this body to petition the state highway commission to take over the present hard-surfaced road which leads from Bessemer City to Cherryville, make it a state highway extending to north of Cherryville to connect at Dave Beams store with the state highway which is now being constructed from Lincoln to Toluca, where it joins the road leading from Shelby to Morganton.

All the speakers of the occasion stressed the point that the opening up of this road as a state highway would not only benefit the town of Cherryville, which is not at present on any hard surface State highway but would bring trade and traffic from a splendid farming section of the western and northwestern parts of Lincoln county to the towns of Cherryville, Bessemer City, Gastonia, Belmont and Charlotte. It would provide the shortest and most direct route from Charlotte and Gastonia to Morganton and would be strictly in line with the state highway commission's policy of linking up county-seat with county-seat by a system of modern hard surfaced highway.

Prison Battler Is Training For Big Fight This Month

Raleigh.—(INS)—Charley Mangum, the "fighting prisoner" is working hard for this coming fight that may net him a mythical title. The only inmate of a state prison ever to go in for professional boxing, Mangum is slated to meet Terry Roberts, middleweight champion of the Carolinas, on the night of June 24.

It probably will be the first time in ring history that a prisoner ever has tried to gain any sort of title while confined behind prison walls.

Mangum is doing hard training each night, sparring with his partners, Gallagher and Kid Turner, the latter a giant black from Boston. This will be the closing ring card for the present season at the penitentiary and Mangum will be given a rest until next fall.

Other bouts on the card call for Charley Hauser, of Fort Bragg and Bennie Mack, of Charlotte, to sling gloves at each other for eight rounds to settle their old argument which had its inception when this pair battle through ten rounds of a draw; Tommie Gallagher, lightweight champ of the Carolinas will exchange wallops with Jess Lasgo, of Charlotte; two negro bantams yet to be selected

will put on the first bout of the evening and there probably will be a battle royal to start off the night's entertainment.

It now appears that the America-to-Europe fliers will be as thick this summer as the non-stop swimmers of the English channel were last summer.

President Coolidge picked the Black Hill of South Dakota for a summer home. A prospective candidate should have a vacation color scheme a little less dismal.

Tom Tarheel says his cows sent Tom Junior to college last year.

FARM CONDITIONS AND GARDNER PLAN

Says Shelby Man Will Go Down In History As Great Carolinian. County Famous.

Stanly News-Herald. "Better rural homes," will be the slogan, it is said, if the next Governor of North Carolina, shall happen to be Hon. O. Max Gardner and that very thing will happen. And if Governor Gardner shall go into the executive mansion at Raleigh with the determination to be of service to the farmers of the state, and shall work to that end, he will go down in history as a great North Carolinian.

"There are 1,000 rural school children in Cleveland county who prepare their lessons every night by electric lights," said Hon. O. Max Gardner in a recent address, while discussing the idea of making conditions more favorable for the rural dwellers. And does any one wonder that Cleveland county is one of the wealthy counties, that it is the home of men who have made that county famous all over the state? Improve the conditions on the farms, make the farmer intelligent and prosperous and the entire world will be blessed thereby.

Advice to Reporters.

Lenior-News Topic. A young man asked us our opinion about entering the newspaper field. We answered this wise:

If he can listen with a smile to tiresome things he's heard oftentimes before; if he can refuse to do what three or four people ask him to do without making them mad; if he can write in a way to make people laugh when he feels like weeping, or in a way to make them weep when he feels like cracking his heels together and laughing out loud; if he can remain silent when he feels like he'll burst wide open if he does not talk; if he can argue without getting mad; if he can refuse a woman's request for free publicity without making all the members of her set get mad at paper; if he can react to the loss of a good news story and catch a better one on the rebound; if he can explain a typographical error without using up more than 30 minutes' time; if he can concentrate and write intelligent copy while three different conversations are going on around him, several typewriters clicking away and the telephone ringing and the subdued hum of the presses in the next room drumming on his ears; if he can explain why Mrs. Jones' poem on "The Sylvan Depth of October Woods" did not appear in the paper without her husband stopping his advertising; if he can take a four-line story and spread column story and condense it to two paragraphs; if he can read proofs without overlooking an error and write headlines without murdering the king's English; if he has a nose for news, an itch for writing and an inclination to work 15 hours a day, then we'd advise him to get into the game.

Man Burned When Truck Catches Fire

Rutherfordton.—Erastus Green, 42, of Waynesville is in the Rutherford hospital in a critical condition as a result of gasoline burns and inhaling flames.

He was returning from Hamlet with a load of peaches in a truck when he got under the car to get gasoline for a friend whose car was stranded near here on the highway. The heat from the exhaust pipe ignited the gasoline.

Sam Beason and Wid Hill were returning from a fox hunt and found Green in a critical condition and rushed him to the hospital. Physicians say he has a chance to recover. His truck and peaches were an entire loss.

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Dad And Daughter In Reunion After 56 Years Apart

(By International News Service.) Washington Court House, Ohio.—After searching for each other over a period of fifty years, a father and daughter have been reunited in this little Ohio town.

When the father, Silas J. Paul, was divorced from his wife in 1877, the couple's little daughter Jennie, 18 months old, went with the mother. Later, reports reached the father that Jennie had passed away. For a time, Paul discredited the reports, owing to their "grapevine" nature, but finally he gave her up for dead, when no trace could be found.

The daughter, now the wife of Charles Rothenberger, Fostoria, O., also believed her "dad" had passed away. About one month ago, a family from Washington Court House moved into a house near the Rothenberger home in Fostoria. Shortly afterward, Mrs. Rothenberger learned from this neighbor that her father was still alive and living here. The daughter and her husband made a hurried trip to the Paul home here and found the father, quite aged, but in good health.

Although Mrs. Rothenberger now nearly 52 years old, she still "baby" to her father. "I never expected to see you again on this earth," the old man exclaimed joyously, tears streaming down his cheeks.



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