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THE DISEASE AND THE CURE.

In yesterday's Astorian appeared a brief local news item which revealed a case of incredible parental depravity. Briefly, the facts were as follows: An Astorian, sitting in a vaudeville show at Portland, chanced to glance up at one of the boxes, where sat a man, his wife and their two children, the youngest aged about 2 years. To this tiny tot the father was administering beer, and the child soon felt the effects of the liquor, to the apparent unalloyed joy of the father.

The story is not a new one, by any means, but it is nevertheless one that should bring to the attention of the officials of the city of Portland the feeling that they are decidedly negligent in their duty. Society has long since decreed that such parents as those who sat in the box at the vaudeville show are not fit to care for children, and has made ample provision for punishment in such cases—if to deprive a brute of this fellow's ilk of his children may properly be called punishment. The spectacle of a 2-year-old babe, yet unable to articulate, under the influence of liquor is indeed a sad one, and the brutish parents should be made to feel the full extent of our rather lame law governing such cases.

Portland is, after 1 a. m., a "closed town." Portland society has willed that persons shall not frequent saloons after the hour named. The law is calculated to regulate the habits of adults, and, while it is said saloons "close at 1 and open at 1:15," the existence of the regulation indicates that the municipality, complying with popular demand, has sought to raise the moral standard by means of 1 o'clock closing. The police religiously make the rounds at the appointed hour and see to it that the saloons are closed.

But how many policemen are to be found watching for just such cases as that reported by the Astorian who visited the vaudeville playhouse? Portland can spend her hard earned money to obliterate mole hills, but she has not a dollar for the removal of her mountains. Portland is not alone at fault in this respect; all the other cities of the country are quite as palpably lacking. The offense of the father is a matter of small concern, comparatively stating the case. The essence of the situation lies in the failure of the police to detect the offender.

The disease has long existed in the land. It is time the cure should be applied—and that cure is vigilance.

A NEW DEAL IN EUROPE.

A French statesman remarked at the beginning of this war that it might lead to new and startling groupings of the powers, says the Saturday Evening Post. It may, indeed. For instance, consider the effect of a complete Russian defeat at sea upon the Franco-Russian alliance.

When that league was formed one of its chief objects in the minds of both parties to it was the creation of a naval power superior to the triple alliance on the one hand, and able to make head against England on the other. This object seemed to be attained. The fleets of France and Russia were much stronger than those of Germany, Austria and Italy, and they appeared on paper a fair match for the navy of England.

But the practical elimination of Russia as a naval power would completely transform the situation. The German navy alone will soon be equal to that of France, so that the French fleet plus the debris of the Russian squadrons would be no match for the forces of the triple alliance. Still less would it be able to challenge British supremacy at sea. Thus the Franco-Russian alliance would lose a great part of its reason for existence. There could hardly be a better illustration of the futility of prophecy. Among all the statesmen who built up the two rival European leagues, and who anxiously canvassed all the possibilities that might affect the position of either of

them, there was probably not one who took account of the contingency of a naval defeat of Russia by Japan.

If the Franco-Russian alliance is to continue it will need to be strengthened in some way at sea. Here is one possible recourse in that direction which no doubt is having earnest consideration at Paris and St. Petersburg. If Italy could be won over from the triple alliance the impaired position of France and Russia would be restored. Italy's present associations are unnatural. She would like to get Trent, Trieste and Dalmatia away from her ally, Austria, and her interests clash with those of Austria in Albania. France and Russia could offer to satisfy her there, and also in Tripoli. As an inducement to break her present relations with England they could promise her the reversion of Malta.

Italy holds the key of the European situation. She is in a position to make the rival powers of the continent bid high for her friendship.

SEND CASSINI HOME.

Count Cassini, the Russian ambassador at Washington, has himself chiefly to blame for no inconsiderable part of the popular sentiment in this country against his government—a sentiment which was at first pro-Japanese rather than anti-Russian, says the Post Intelligencer.

His attitude toward the American people and the American press has been one of contemptuous and domineering superiority, which has been shown not only in his communiques with the state department, and in his self-sought interviews with press agencies, but it has also been made manifest generally and more strongly in his private conversation.

In fact, not since Sir Lionel Sackville West, as British minister, showed that he was incapable of understanding a republic, and so was recalled, has there been any representative of any foreign power so distinctly persona non grata to the American people—however welcome he may possibly be officially—as this small representative of a great empire.

Whoever runs may read in Wednesday's and Thursday's papers the difference between Count Cassini's tactlessness and Russian official tact, his lecturing, blustering style and the graceful, easy conciliatory manner of the Russian foreign office. This alone shows his incompetence.

The truth is that no one in this country is carrying a chip on his shoulder for Russia to knock off, as Count Cassini seems to think. No one wishes Russia to be ruined; but in this war the sympathies of the American people are with Japan for reasons which are good and satisfactory, which are founded on facts and common sense such as Count Cassini can never appreciate, and which he seeks to overcome by telling us we ought to be grateful to his country.

There is no foreign ambassador at our national capital today who understands this country so little as Count Cassini, and his government would play a master stroke if it would recall him and send instead even a Buriat Lama.

Some startling statistics in regard to immigration have been presented to the department of congress and labor by the lunacy commission of this state, and they call for some action by the federal authorities, says the Brooklyn Standard Union. By these statistics it appears fully 60 per cent of all those who are in asylums or homes for the feeble-minded in New York state are of foreign birth. There are now 800 such immigrant patients in New York asylums, and, in view of the inadequacy of the United States officials, the state has asked the general government to relieve it of one-half this number. With over 3,000 immigrants landing daily in New York from foreign countries a more thorough system could be extended to the place of embarkation of these immigrants. That it has been a practice in the past for foreign communities to ship their feeble-minded or pauper surplus to this country is notorious, and the practice has only been stopped in part. It must be stopped altogether by more stringent laws and stricter enforcement thereof.

The war map just issued by the New York Tribune is like everything else that comes from the Tribune office—the best. It takes in all of the country occupied or in dispute, with the most modern spelling of names, and will prove of exceptional value during the progress of the hostilities in the far east.

The republican party will be 50 years old this summer, and an interesting history of the organization has come to us in the form of a booklet compiled by Charles Emory Smith, editor of the Philadelphia Press. The work is an accurate one and will be of rare historical value.

The price of radium has increased from \$8,400,000 a pound to \$12,600,000.

In spite of the statement that it will not cure cancer. Radium is giving whalebone a close brush for first place.

The steady advance in the price of coal—no less than 440 per cent—which has taken place since 1898 has stimulated experiments looking to the invention of artificial fuels. Results obtained in foreign countries from the use of lignite and peat in briquetted form should encourage producers in the United States to try similar methods of manufacture. Small sizes of anthracite coal formerly wasted are indeed recovered now by washeries from the old culm banks and utilized. A large amount of coal lost in the form of dust or finely pulverized material might also be put into convenient shape for domestic consumption and slack now wasted at many of the bituminous mines in the United States might be used to advantage if compressed into briquettes. There are many indications that the time is not far distant when these neglected fuel resources will be all utilized.

Everybody who has spent any time on the continent of Europe has noticed the economy practiced by Europeans in the consumption of coal and marveled that the results should be so satisfactory. To be sure, the lofty, tombstone-like porcelain stove of the Germans has a chilly look at first, and the cooler atmosphere of German houses may give one a homesick longing for the furnace heated rooms of America, but gradually the open-minded stranger comes to look with approval on the European arrangements for keeping warm, and to wonder why his own people have not perceived the beauty, cleanliness, the economy, and satisfactory results that some patent fuels have to recommend them. That many a Yankee has turned the matter over in his busy brain is attested by a chapter on artificial fuels in Edward W. Parker's report on "The Production of Coal in 1902," which is about to be published by the United States geological survey as an extract from the annual volume of mineral resources.

Prior to 1902, about 400 patents had been issued in the United States on artificial fuels, but up to the close of 1901 none had proved a commercial success. Mr. Parker gives a list of United States patents granted since January 1, 1902. It remains to be seen whether any of them will be successfully developed. The list includes 37 patents, but contains no mention of fuels made from petroleum or petroleum residue unless used in connection with coal, lignite, or peat. Neither does it include any compounds that have for their object the increase of fuel efficiency unless they are used in the manufacture of the fuel itself. Three patents were used on briquetting machinery.

Inopportune Optimism. (Eugene Guard.)

Louis Mott, sentenced to hang at Missoula, Mont., March 18, for wife murder, has written Congressman Joe Dixon, of that state, concluding with: "I will be in Washington on March 20, and I hope to meet you at 10 a. m." It will be noticed that he gives himself two days in which to make the trip. That he will be hanged is reasonably certain. That he or any part of him may be found in any other place than the grave after the law has exacted its penalty may be questioned. There is no proof—nothing but hope.

Our Navy as a Peace Promoter. (Albany Herald.)

In the event of war and rumors of war nations not directly contending become at once fearful of possible trade influences of an unfavorable character. A nation will not tamely submit to interference with its commerce. This accounts for the navies of the world as much as the tendency toward conquest. This is a good reason for the maintenance of a good navy by our own government, not to provoke war, rather to promote peace, and at the same time to look after any doors that ought to open to American trade and are closed.

Chicago's Good Example. (Tacoma Ledger.)

Violators of Chicago's anti-spitting ordinance are being arrested by scores. They are generally reprimanded and compelled to pay costs. Chicagoans will be more careful about expectorating if the present crusade is long continued. Chicagoans are not the only people who should be taught to spit according to rule or not to spit at all.

An Evidence of Good Faith.

The fact that corruption has been unearthed in the postal department is all the more credit to the present administration. The people are willing to trust a man like President Roosevelt for his cleanliness.

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Table with columns: LEAVE, PORTLAND, ARRIVE. Rows for Astoria and Seaside Division.

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(Salem Statesman.) Russia directly accuses Japan of violating the rules of war. This is a grave indictment, and may yet lead to trouble between those two nations.