

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER RAILROADED TO U.S. ASYLUM AND KEPT 2 YEARS THOUGH SANE

BY GILSON GARDNER.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 26.—Congress is to be asked for sweeping reforms in the treatment of the insane in the District of Columbia.

St. Elizabeth hospital for the insane is under fire. From this hospital recently have been released two refined women who have been proven sane, Mrs. Frank Corbett and her daughter, Cornelia. Two years and four months they were immured in this institution under circumstances that indicate the lack of safeguards about the liberties of American citizens.

Mrs. and Miss Corbett were in the insane asylum two years and four months!

They and their friends claim that they were not insane when committed nor while they were in the asylum.

It is positive that they are now, and were when discharged, sane.

No wrong motive can be discovered as actuating Dr. Hamlin in the matter. He seems to have believed himself absolutely right.

The St. Elizabeth's hospital affair promises to become national in its scope. Congress is responsible for the asylum and the lunacy laws of the district. St. Elizabeth's is maintained by the national government. It harbors 2,600 patients, a large proportion of them criminally insane.

Mrs. and Miss Corbett have been visited and examined by scores of people since their deliverance from the asylum and have been pronounced by them to be persons of unusual intelligence, refinement and sanity. Dr. Robert Rayburn, an alienist of national reputation, who was one of President Garfield's attending physicians, gives professional opinion that both ladies are sane. So does Dr. Charles M. Emmons and many others.

Women who have interested themselves in the women are Mrs. Fred Dubois, wife of the senator from Idaho, and not only believes them sane now, but expresses the opinion that they were of perfectly sound mind while in the asylum. Others who are emphatic as to the sanity of the Corbetts is Mrs. John N. Culbertson, wife of a Presbyterian minister, president of the World's Interdenominational union of the District of Columbia; Mrs. Clinton Smith, president of the W. C. T. U. of this city; Mrs. Sheldon, its secretary, and Mrs. Kate Hayden, who has known the family for years.

On Saturday morning, June 8, 1904, Mrs. and Miss Corbett were interrupted at their household duties and bundled off to the asylum. First came Drs. Gunton and Watkins, examining physicians sent by the district sanitary officer. They asked questions, the trend of which puzzled the two lone women. A police matron and two officers came later and took them away in an ambulance. A visitor during these proceedings was Mrs. Dr. Alice Burritt, a family friend and fellow parishioner of the Church of the Covenant, Washington's most fashionable and aristocratic Presbyterian church, the pastor of which, Dr. Tennis S. Hamlin, is one of the most influential of the board of visitors of St. Elizabeth's asylum. Appealed to by aged Mrs. Corbett and her daughter, this lady reassured them as much as possible.

What part Dr. Hamlin had in the commitment of the Corbett family to the asylum he has since explained to the deacons and trustees of his church, whom he summoned to hear his side of the case. His statement was supported by two physicians from the asylum. The commitment was secured at his request, Dr. Alice Burritt signing the necessary affidavit. Dr. Hamlin's own signature is also on the document.

After the removal from their home Mrs. Corbett and her daughter were kept in the asylum two weeks before they were taken to the city hall, where was performed a ceremony peculiar to this local government, of "trial by a marshal's jury." A bunch of 13 men are rounded up by the marshal and the case is presented to them. There is no judge to preside, no record is kept of the testimony, no lawyer is provided for the accused, there is no cross-examination—in short, there is wanting the popular safeguards which even a common pleas court hearing insures to the meaneast criminal. A number of neighbors and friends were present, desiring to be heard, but the jury listened only to evidence presented by the pastor of the accused women, Dr. Hamlin. The latter recommended that they be sent to the asylum. He said he believed them insane and feared they would do themselves harm.

It required but a very short time to shut out the world to the mother and daughter—sentenced for life to the lunatic asylum, stigmatized,



MRS. FRANK CORBETT AND HER DAUGHTER, CORNELIA L. CORBETT.

bility before the law. For over two years thereafter Mrs. Corbett and her daughter Cornelia were kept behind the forbidding walls of the prison for the insane, in spite of the vigorous efforts of friends in their behalf. In the meantime Dr. Hamlin secured the appointment of another member of his church as trustee of the personal effects of the unfortunate women, Frederick A. Fenning, who makes a business of acting as legal custodian of the personal effects of those who are committed to St. Elizabeth's. There was an auction of the household goods of the Corbetts, which realized less than \$500, from which costs and fees were deducted until the amount put to the credit of the women was about \$330. Charges against the fund included \$20 to a lawyer for drawing up the petition for Fenning's appointment, a fee of \$20 to two civil physicians for testifying against them, and a fee of \$30 to Mr. Fenning for his legal work in fighting the effort to release them.

In October of this year the story of Mrs. Corbett and her daughter was told for the first time before a court of record jury. They were at once pronounced sane and given their liberty. Their release was brought about by the Medico-Legal society, whose attorney, R. P. Evans, had been interested in the Corbetts by Mrs. Culbertson and others.

Previous to the success of the efforts to rescue the women from the asylum, District Judge Bernard had refused a habeas corpus application after hearing the testimony of Dr. Hamlin and others. Before their commitment to the asylum the Corbetts were in financial distress and used to write letters to Dr. Hamlin to get help, it is said. Mrs. Hamlin often called upon them with clothing and provisions. At the behest of Dr. Hamlin, while he was abroad, Dr. Burritt spent more money on them. Dr. Burritt has told the writer that

she signed the affidavit reluctantly and under a misapprehension of what the consequences would be. She says the Corbetts had become a charge upon the church and it was her belief that by signing the document "an investigation would be started" and that "relatives of the Corbetts would come to the front and look after them."

Dr. Hamlin's view of the Corbett affair is based upon his belief that they were insane. He says that he had noticed traces of mental aberration in Mrs. Corbett years ago. Certain remarks which she made to him about a sermon which he preached, he says, revealed to him her unsettled state of mind. As time went on, he says, he noted the growth of hallucinations. Mrs. Corbett talked to him about wrongs in not having more money from their estate. Miss Cornelia became convinced that they were not treated right by the executors. The women were troubled continually about the stories about Frank Corbett, the deceased father. All these things, Dr. Hamlin believed, were delusions. He considered the secluded life the ladies led to be unnatural and says he laid awake at night wondering what they would not do. He says he feared they would commit suicide, and therefore he decided to act vigorously in the matter.

Mrs. Corbett is the widow of Frank Corbett, once prominent in the tobacco business, politics and the church. The family consisted of him, his wife, who was a daughter of Judge Thos. Hood, who came from Madison, Wis., and was a

close friend of President Lincoln and Secretary Stanton, and three children—Cornelia, Fannie and Brooke. About 11 years ago misfortune overtook the family. There was dissension, Corbett began to drink and neglect his work and interest in the Covenant Sunday school, and his family lived apart from him on an allowance. The father's habits preyed upon Fannie's mind so that she was finally placed in the state asylum at Staunton, Va.

Young Brooke attempted to make a living for the family, but did not prosper, although the pastor, Rev. Hamlin, secured him several positions. He became unbalanced also and was sent to the Staunton asylum. He was paroled for 60 days, but rather than go back shot himself.

The father died in May, 1897, from an overdose of chloral. He left a large part of the estate to his wife and daughter Cornelia. The executor found it heavily involved, however, and some months before the two women were put into the asylum revenues from the estate ceased coming to them. The two lived in a suburb with the remnant of the beautiful things with which they had surrounded themselves in the days of their prosperity. They were evicted from this house.

Cornelia earned a little with her needle and brush, and with aid from charitable people they were living a pathetic, retired life when their misfortune culminated with the commitment to the asylum.



St. Elizabeth asylum of the insane, located near Washington, D. C., where Mrs. and Miss Corbett were kept prisoners. It is maintained by the federal government. It is one of the largest institutions in the country, harboring nearly 3,000 patients.

FEDERATIONS PLATFORM

The American Federation of Labor issued the following statement Saturday, which it is said is a partial announcement at this time of the demands of organized labor:

In furtherance of our claim, namely, that our principles comprise the fullest and highest type of human activity and from time to time will be enhanced and advanced in accordance with the demands to satisfy human needs and desires, we recommend the following as a partial statement at this time of the economic demands of the American Federation of Labor:

Free schools, free text books and compulsory education.

Abolition of all forms of involuntary servitude, except for punishment for crime.

Preventing protest against the issuance and abuse of injunctions.

A strict recognition of not over eight hours per day on all federal, state or municipal work, and at not less than the prevailing per diem wage rate of the class of employment in the vicinity where the work is performed.

Release from employment one day in seven.

The abolition of the contract system on public work.

The municipal ownership of public utilities.

The abolition of the sweatshop system.

Sanitary inspection of factories, workshops, mines and home.

Liability of employers for injury to body or loss of life.

The nationalization of telegraph and telephone.

The passage of anti-Chinese labor laws in states where they do not exist, and rigid defense of them where they have been enacted into law.

Woman suffrage co-equal with man suffrage.

Initiative, referendum, imperative mandate and right of recall.

Suitable and plentiful playgrounds for children in all cities.

Continued agitation for the public bath system in all cities and towns that there shall be bathroom and bathroom attachments in all houses or compartments used for habitation.

We favor a system of finance whereby money shall be issued exclusively by the government with regulations that will protect it from manipulation by the banking interests for their own profit.

CHORUS IS GROWING.

Spokane's big male chorus, which meets every Sunday at the studio of Prof. Krantz, is meeting with great success. The chorus now numbers nearly 30 members and is receiving additions at every meeting. The class of music taken up consists of such compositions as "Comrades in Arms," "The Chapel," etc. It is probable that the chorus will give a concert some time this winter.

DREW BIG SALARY AND WANTS TO PAY IT BACK

OMAHA, Nov. 26.—Will some kind person please take \$1,900 off the hands of Congressman E. M. Pollard, of Nebraska? Mr. Pollard has that amount which he does not want; but the queer part of it is that he can't get rid of it.

Elected a year ago to fill the unexpired term of Jesse Burkett, who had resigned, several months elapsed before Congressman Pollard took the oath of office. But according to the usual custom he drew pay for the entire time.

When he came up for re-election the democrats made political capital out of the situation and called upon Mr. Pollard to pay back the money. Pollard refused. Because his initials were "E. M.," they called him "Easy Money" Pollard.

When the votes were counted Pollard's majority was a handsome one. Now that he has been vindicated he wants to pay back the money. A check for the amount sent to the sergeant-at-arms has been returned to him.

"I am anxious to refund the money," said the congressman, "but I didn't want to be forced to do it by my political opponents." Mr. Pollard still has the check and is trying to find a way to hand over the money to the government.



CONGRESSMAN E. M. POLLARD.

TAKE RELIGIOUS CENSUS

The county Sunday school convention has employed Edgar B. Van Osdel as director of the religious census to be taken of this city and county and the project is now in shape for systematic prosecution until completed. Mr. Van Osdel will direct the city census taking from headquarters at 124 Wall st., having under his charge a director for each ward and deputies for each precinct. Hillyard will be canvassed by the same meth from the local headquarters.

F. E. Elmendorf has been named director for the First ward in this city; John Anderson, Second; Mrs. R. W. Smart, Third; Mrs. J. M. Simpson, Fourth; Adolph Nelson, Fifth.

The results of the census will show the number of church members in the city and county, their addresses and churches. The number of children of school age and those actually attending school, will be shown with other important data.

No date for beginning the work has been set. About 800 canvassers will be required to take the city census. The Spokane County Sunday School association is bearing the expense.

The Spokane Press is the only penny paper in the Inland Empire.

MAKE SPOKANE SHINE AT NIGHT

Night will be like day along several of Spokane's business streets when present plans for sidewalk illumination are put into effect. The Los Angeles style of installing "electrolights" or street lamps of high power on ornamented pillars along the curbs has been followed by the firms that have decided on adopting the night beautification scheme, and the result will be a revelation in artificial illumination.

L. M. Davenport intends to install concrete pillars on the curb line around his building. These pillars, placed at short intervals, will support hewn beams from which will be suspended 200 electric lanterns.

The management of Ellers' piano house, and other firms on Sprague av., are taking up the plan in a way that promises a general illumination along that street. Thirteen iron pillars to support lights of 100 candle power will be placed by the Spokane & Eastern Trust Co. along the Howard and Sprague faces of its building. Eight electrolights are being placed in position at Murgitroyd's drug store, corner of Post and Howard. These pillars will be 14 feet high.

SNEAK THIEVES

The show case in front of Sam's second hand store on Front av. was broken into last evening and some cheap watches stolen.

Thomas Shoveley, rooming at the New York lodging house, was robbed of a watch last night. Carl Mitchell, 8415 Walnut st., told the police this morning that last night some one entered his place and stole a suitcase full of old clothing.

FOR THE OPEN SHOP.

SEATTLE, Nov. 26.—No demand for a "closed shop," or, in other words, the employment exclusively of union men, will be granted by

the Master Builders' association or any other Seattle organization of employers of labor. It is not likely that the demand for the suppression of non-union labor will be urged strongly by the Building Trades assembly.

Secretary Brass, of the Citizens' alliance, believes there will be no strike and that the chances of trouble are remote.

PERHAPS HE WAS.



He—Who was that young man hugging you last night?
She—Oh, he is a book agent.
He—Looked to me more like a press agent.

ELKS WILL VOTE.

On Wednesday evening Spokane Elks and all other lodges of the order in the country will vote on the proposition to submit a new constitution to replace that framed by the grand lodge held in Denver. It is unsatisfactory in some respects.

TACOMA WIDE OPEN.

TACOMA, Nov. 26.—Gambling has been resumed in Tacoma. On Pacific av. the dens are reported wide open. There is no attempt at secrecy.

CATCH CUBAN REBELS.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Nov. 26.—Magoon wires that rufales have captured a band of eight who were disarmed and taken to Cienfuegos to answer charges of disturbances in plotting against the government of Cuba.

A New York woman has written a book advocating trial marriages. Oh, shush! Hasn't marriage enough trials?

DO YOU KNOW THAT WENTWORTH IS GIVING AWAY FREE A BIG 9-Lb. TURKEY

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Near car line, school, churches and stores; with graded streets, water mains, 15 minute car service, and all city conveniences, but no city taxes.

In Hillyard

Hillyard property is on the rise. In a year from now it will be double present prices. It is now the lowest on the market. Lots out in the woods on the north side, further out in point of time than Hillyard, sell for double the money. If you can spare \$5 a month, you can make big profits in Hillyard lots.

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