THE CARLISLE MERCURY

ESTABLISHED 1867

Entered at the Carlisle Postoffice as second class matter

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One Year (in advance) $2.00
Six Months (in advance) $1.00
Three Months (in advance) ..... .65

Member Kentucky Press Association

Member National Editorial Association

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1930

POTENTIAL DYNAMITE

There's potential dynamite in that Highway Ripper Bill, or so it seems to The Mercury, which never was a powder expert. Governor Sampson is now the highway Commissioner as constituted. It is quite possible that rushing this legislation through may result in an exploding two years hence, when the Democratic party goes before the voters asking for endorsement and assuming the burdens of administering a referendum of dollars places a responsibility upon this Legislature whereby the Democratic party may become a whole lot disorganized, may well become a grumbling burden at the end of two years.

In his statement in support of the bill, given to the press Monday, Lieutenant Governor Crabbe says:

> The men who will expend this vast sum must be of such character, ability and recognized integrity and so free from political bias and partisanship as to command the respect and confidence of the people of the State.

In the event of the passage of the bill, that must be done. Otherwise the Democratic party will find itself in much the same relation to public opinion as is Governor Sampson now. As this is written there are indications that party pressure may be brought to bear on House members to push this week indicated a desire to get shut of the matter of this bill. It is slowly in the realization that the counsel of those who would make haste slowly will have prevailed when this is read.

AN ABSOLUTE GIFT

Let it be clearly understood that there are "no strings" to the offer made to Senator Coleman du Pont to provide $230,000 for the purchase of Cumberland Falls and surrounding acres for the State of Kentucky.

If the Legislature accepts this generous offer by passing a bill directing the attorney general to institute condemnation proceedings for the purchase of the Falls area, this natural wonder will become the property of the people of Kentucky and of the Nation.

The building of a hard-surfaced road to the Falls, the erection of adequate hotels to insure proper care of such a visitor, the proper care of such a property, and may be accomplished with a reasonable amount of money. For Cumberland Falls is itself a drawing card of the best advertising material. They parrot it up some how, but there be no more "cakes and ale."

PROPHET OF SPRINGTIME

Summer is in-umen in.
Lhatz nize outa sinner.

So sang the ancient poet. But summer has already come in when the American cuckoo, familiarly known as a "rain-crow," gives voice to his monotonous moaning chant.

This spring is not far behind, when [illegible] -second-the-corner begins to sing [illegible] lengthen and rain-warmed fields [illegible]. Very-like the chattering Eskimo sparrow save for a striped breast and longer tail, the song sparrow has one of the sweetest voices of all birdland.

Listen the first warm February days and you may hear him start faltering, trying and then burst into song. Three preliminary notes prelude a trill that ends in plaintive sweetness. The notes are almost impossible of imitation by means of words, but our writer hears him say: "Maids, maids, maids, bring on your feaghetie-title-title-ettle."

Once you have heard his cheerful little song you may be sure that though winter may yet blanket the fields and icy winds blow, Spring is iumen in.

WHAT BIRD IS THAT?

THE DOWNY WOODPECKER

Of birds that remain with us invariably in winter, the Downy Woopecker is seldom missing from the bird-bath shelf or the lump of suet, which he most enjoys. To most people a woodpecker is a woodpecker and as a consequence Downy is often made the goat for the tree-tapping mischief of the real Sapsucker. In fact, you will hear this diminutive woodpecker called a "sapsucker" by most people.

Downy is about the size of the English Sparrow. The male shows a scarlet spot on his neck. There is a white stripe down his back and his wing feathers and wing coverts are spotted with white. The middle tail feathers are black, the outer ones white, barred with black. The forehead is like the female without the scarlet nape.

You see a bird answering the above description, but almost as large as a Robin, he is the Hairy Woodpecker, big cousin of the Downy. Both love suet and may be seen nearly every day, where a chunk of this beef fat has been nailed up for them. The larger bird is not so sociable as Downy, who, when the gay summer birds have returned to their southern homes and the wind whistles dreadly through the tree tops, joins the chickadees and nuthatches and during the winter they are inseparable companions. Perhaps they share with him the song quarters in some old trunk that he has hollowed out for a winter home."

At least—and this is one thing not to Downy's credit—his mouth abused wife does not share his winter home, nor will he permit her to share the suet, while he is about. In spring, however, his fancy "turns to thoughts of love," and his rolling tattoo drumming on some resonant branch is presumably sweet music to the ears of his lady, so easily neglected all winter.

BOUQUET FOR COUNTRY PRESS

(Richmond Register)

E. A. Jonas, editor of the Louisville Herald-Post, commending upon the recent meeting of the Kentucky Press Association, called attention to the increased prestige of the so-called country press in the State and nation, a prestige which somewhat flatters the vanity of country editors.

"How many people, we wonder, realize the place in the community held by the state press in cities below the two thousand ratings"

"It is much more than the exchange of local news and the current events of neighborhood gossip. Often enough in matters of local importance it casts the deciding vote, and there are happily instances when its word carries its weight by no manner of means determined by its circulation. In all flagrant cases of public opinion the whole state over and is more truly the voice of thinking, independent people than many a city daily. The importance of which is in inverse ration to the number of its readers.

"Show us a town, show us a community, show us a state, in the broad sense, a first-rate newspaper, daily or weekly, and we will show you a town which it is a privilege to live and a proud thing to be a citizen."

BITTER-SWEET VANDALS

Cynthiana Democrat

Bitter-sweet has become fashionable as a winter decoration in the past few years and is gathered extensively in this section of the state. It is said even small wagon-loads are gathered and carried from this county to nearby cities, and sold on the streets at fifty cents for a small bunch. A friend who had occasion to wait in a door-way at a city car barn during the pre-holiday season saw a push-cart dealer sell as much as $8 worth in half an hour a small bunch at a time. That was almost crime enough for probably the weed was gathered from some farmer's fence row