THE CARLISLE MERCURY

ESTABLISHED 1887

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	50c

MEMBER KENTUCKY PRESS ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NATIONAL EDITORIAL ASSOCIATION

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1935

"The Aftermath Of Sudden Death."

Did you know that more Americans have been killed in automobile accidents than we lost in all of this country's wars? We saw that statement in a reliable publication last week. It is almost unbelievable that fewer Americans have been slain by muskets, rifles, cannon, machine guns, bombs, bayonets, swords and poison gas since our earliest war as a nation than have met death through fast, reckless and irresponsible driving of motor cars during the comparatively brief time that the use of this method of transportation has been general. We have no doubt that it is true. The toll of motor accidents mounts yearly, despite traffic laws and speed limits. Evidently we will not stop the carnage through legislation. We must gather through repeated education of the automobile driver, until he is thoroughly aware of the fact that a speeding motor car is one of the most effective engines of destruction in our civilization.

Some weeks ago we reprinted from the Reader's Digest a blood-chilling list of realtor, depicting in gruesome detail the horrors of automobile wrecks. The author captioned his article, "Sudden Death." It was well-written, but from the point of view of news reporters, State police and traffic officers, "in at the death" in so many smash-ups. Monday we received from the editors of the Reader's Digest what they called "a reprint," proof sheets of a similar article, written by an embalmer in a small town in Nebraska.

It is not pleasant reading, we warn you; the memory of its poignancy will stay with you a long while, we trust, as you press the accelerator to the floor boards to see what the old boat will do! In the hope that all of us will remember, we are republishing it here:

THE AFTERMATH OF SUDDEN DEATH

(By A. J. Brackett)

"After the smashing of the highway."—And Sudden Death." The Reader's Digest was bombarded by proffered "follow-ups." But we thought enough had been said. Then, from an embalmer in the little village of Chappel, Nebraska, came the following—poignant in its emotional sincerity. Impressive in its photographic directness. As in the case of the previous article, we caution the sensitive reader not to read too much of it.—Editor's Note.)

—Just Passing—

Two o'clock in the morning. Is that the phone? There it goes again. I grope my way sleepily to it. Hello . . . yes, I understand . . . a wreck on the highway two miles east . . . We'll be right out.

What a night! One car, a new one, now a tangled heap of scrap at one side of the road. Shattered glass everywhere. The crowd has gathered and they have dug one body out and it lies a bloody, grotesque, twisted thing under the pale light of the moon. Another lies groaning and mumbling, "My back is broken I think." We lift him as gently as possible to the ambulance cot and hurry to the hospital. He dies two hours later calling for "Edith."

How did it happen? The report is they were trying to pass a car against a too close oncoming car. What does it matter? We go back for the dead body and in the operating room under the strong light we find that we have a job on hand trying to embalm this poor thing; to put it back together as best we can in an attempt to relieve the terrible heartache of those loved ones who will hasten to see him. What a mess! Hagged bones sticking out through cut, ground flesh. Face crushed to a pulp. Can we make it look like a human being and resemble the fine strong young man that it was only an hour ago? It is just our job and we're getting used to it.

Won't it make us gun-shy of this fast driving? Well, we wish all the speeders could spend a night with us, occasionally, in the operating rooms of the mortuary.

—Old Barteyerm—

"Three little kiddies, poor little tykes, the oldest only seven. They hardly know what it is all about. This time it is a young mother returning home, with her husband and children, from a happy visit. Kiddies are playing in the back seat of the car. Bang! Crash! A sickening twisting and tearing and it is all over.

Just two drunks in an old car coming over the top of the hill on the wrong side of the road, but what slaughter! We work feverishly all night attempting to place a new nose and one side of the face on this mangled body which has been the loving mother of these three small helpless children, now in the hospital, two not expected to live.

We secure a recent picture of this mother and by long hours of patchwork and filling those mutilated features and showing the body under indirect light we keep from the loved ones the horrible picture of this mutilation.

—The Lonely Pedestrian—

Such a scene! We found his arm, hanging on the latch of the car door, torn completely from the socket at the elbow. The mangled body lay doubled up in the middle of the road.

Just an old man walking along in the dark on the wrong side of the road, the car coming over the brow of the hill headlights blinding him. Not a chance of escape.

—Endurance vs. Death—

Just three happy boys on their way across the country to Detroit. Constant driving, day and night, with a change of driver when tired hands, feet endurance has its limit. We pick them up on the side of the road where they have crashed a telephone pole and overturned. Not an easy thing to telephone the poor father out on the Coast and inform him that the body of his boy lies in our mortuary.

A car that matches his, huge plastic art and dermatosurgery. Before the body is almost lifelike appearance, but we cannot bring back that youthful smile or happy laugh which he carried when he left home. These are only memories to his loved ones.

—Dangerous Corners—

We natives all know that was a mean corner, properly marked with a turn sign, but such a sharp turn. To take it at more than 20 miles was unsafe. He must have been going 50 at least. No one saw it happen. They found him with the car overturned, the sharp edge of the runningboard, where it joins the rear fender, resting on his head. Why do they always have their heads mashed up so? I wonder if this isn't the hope of every embalmer when he receives an auto accident call: "I hope the head is all right." They usually are not.

Such a great big fine fellow in the pink of health the epitome of life. And his poor young wife. . . . We put her to bed when she arrives and try to make her comfortable until we can finish our work, so she will never know what he looked like when we found him.

A babe to come soon, who will never know a father except by tales which are told.

—Dense Fog—

The lunch for school was in the back seat, the case of eggs for the grocer intact, but the beautiful life of little schoolgirl was gone forever.

A foggy morning, a narrow bridge. The sharp, splintered end of the bridge rail drove through the windshield and tore away one side of her face.

Poor little brother, who had been driving, how heartbroken and sorrowful he was. It was hard to see, and how was he to know that he should have pulled to the side of the road and stopped until the fog lifted, even though they were late for school?

—Loose Gravel—

Not much to do this time. The whole thing was on fire when we arrived. We could see this trucks whole rear end over the top of the hill and hit the loose gravel.

The warning sign was up so the Highway Department had fulfilled its duty, but there it lay where it had skidded and turned completely around and over. A twisted mass of iron, that fatal smell of burning flesh and a few bones to tell the tale.

How will we prepare these remains for burial? Well, how would you?

And so it goes, on and on, in this small town of not 10,000. And what befalls us here to the daily toll in metropolitan cities and the countless towns larger than ours, and we have a very faint idea of the destruction on our highways.

Over 36,000 killed this way last year. Will it be more next year? And will you be one of that number? Why won't you?

Did You Ever See These?

And, by the way, did you ever see a man carrying a billboard under his arm? No. Did you ever see a handbill on a reading table? No. Did you ever see a picture of how hay was come into the home via radio? No. Did you ever see a live newspaper thrown into the wastebasket without being read? No. That's why advertising in the Mercury brings results.

An Editorial That We Liked

Editor's Note. The following editorial, written by Roscoe C. Cox and printed in his Edmonton (Utah) Reporter, received favorable comment in his community and has been reprinted by other papers in Utah.

History tells us that some of the brave and mighty warriors of old, in order to make their fierceness appear more ferocious, and to awe their enemies, would paint the blood of those whom they slew in battle. There still are a few savages in remote jungles who practice such tactics, the story books tell us.

Such things have no place in a civilized society and tales of such savagery are highly repugnant to most people today. Yet, if street talk can be taken seriously, we have those among us who would gladly profit from the shedding of human blood. It is not unusual to hear some man go so far as to say he hopes a general war will take place in Europe.

"What does it matter to us if they do kill off a few thousand Italians, Ethiopians or other foreigners? And just look how a war would increase the price of our things we raise."

That seems to be the attitude of many otherwise fine folks of America. At the base of the attitude is the cause of all our modern wars—selfishness. We care not for the interest of others so long as we ourselves prosper. We care not how many men are slaughtered, women are ravished, and orphans are left to starve and die in other lands so long as it increases the price of things we have to sell. Such an attitude may not be quite so bad as the drinking of the blood of human beings but it is showing both a willingness and delight in profit through the blood of fellow-beings.

It's the wrong attitude, folks. War is war no matter where it occurs and, in one place or another, war is hell. It also has a tendency to spread and to involve those who most dislike it and who least want to enter it. Those who are willing to countenance war in some far land would be just as willing to have it occur in our land if they could be sure they would not suffer personally because of it.

The world, to be free from the curse of war, must first be free from that attitude which would say: "Let them fight. It can't do us any harm and it's certainly going to increase our profits." When such an attitude ceases to exist, there will be no need for armies or navies. Men will be willing to live and let live, will not seek unfair advantage over their fellow men, and will not glory in personal gain from the blood of others.

Such a time may be far in the future but there are signs that give hope it may be obtained. For instance, we no longer drink the blood of those whom we kill in battle but are willing to get our profits from human blood in a more "refined" manner. The fact, too, that while many say, "Let 'em fight," there are many others who are spreading the doctrine that war never pays.

With conditions in the world as they are today, it is well to be prepared for any emergency that might arise. It is well to have a defensive army and navy and air force, but while we are looking over the tax bill necessary to support these institutions, let's remember that this expense must be borne because somewhere in Europe, or Asia or Africa there are those who would use of us here. "Let them fight. What difference does it make to us if a few thousand of those Yankees are killed off, and just think how a war in Europe or America would increase the price of the things we have to sell."

Also while we are going to the expense of maintaining our defensive forces, let's remember that the army would be much larger and the expense would be much greater under any other form of government. Countries with dictators may cut down the number of unemployed but they put them in the army.

And while we are maintaining our defenses, let's prevents and practice the doctrine that it is not good that men should drink human blood or that they should delight in receiving profits from the shedding of human blood, or even be willing to take such profits. Some day people might learn that war never pays and may be willing to see it abolished from all lands forever. But that day will not come as long as men say, "Let them fight. What difference does it make to us if a few thousand or million of those foreigners get killed off? And just think how a war would boost prices of the things we have to sell."

WEIGHTY PROBLEMS FACE CHANDLER

(Dr. J. B. Shannon, President Kentucky Academy of Social Science)

The year 1935 has been a memorable one in Kentucky politics. The state has heard speeches of a political nature for over one-half of the year but as for first time in history, has been thrown on Kentucky's most pressing problems. In retrospect we can say that Kentucky has had the unfortunate privilege of having had its first doubt in many years. It has probably been worth the price since it has established the precedent that a primary choice candidate can be elected governor notwithstanding a bitter pre-nomination campaign. The recent election was significant also because of the prominent part played by organized labor. In addition, Kentucky has elected its first negro representative to the legislature. It is not to be forgotten that youth has played a more important role in recent campaigns both as candidates and as electors than in any previous one.

We face the future, therefore, with less than fifty days left to usher in a "New Deal." It is the purpose of the Kentucky Academy of Social Science to throw as much light as possible upon public questions. During the next few months scholars trained in their particular fields will present facts that will be of value to the Commonwealth. In this introductory article we will merely attempt to point out some of the major questions before the state at this time. Of course, there are numerous others, as in the problem of taxation. The victors as well as the vanquished realize that the abolition of the sales tax, and it would appear to be doomed to defeat, should be the first act. The sales tax has been promised. It goes without saying that the present state administration faces a grave task in an attempt to raise revenues to meet to a growing debt and to curtail future expenditure. A twelve dollar per capita tax, distributed on real and personal property will require additional sums. The most crucial question before Kentucky today is the question as to where the Chandler administration will turn for revenue.

In the second place, the problem of a remodelling of the governmental machinery of state administration is a live issue. To revamp the present setup and to establish a modern and responsible government is a well-nigh super-human task, but with the prospect of the state taking on additional functions it is a stark necessity which the new administration will ignore at its peril.

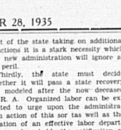
Thirdly, the state must decide whether it will pass a state security act modeled after the now deceased N. R. A. Organized labor can be expected to urge upon the administration action of this sor tas well as the creation of an effective labor department and probably the ralification of the Child Labor Amendment to the Federal Constitution. Doubtless labor also will ask an effective administration of the present child labor laws.

Fourthly, the matter of consolidation of counties, the elimination of the various fee system is being discussed more and more in intelligent circles. There can be no great saving in government unless some action in this direction is taken. The condition of Kentucky's penal and public welfare institutions is critical, and the necessity of the prison and overhauling must be faced. Kentucky must also begin to consider state planning as a definite function of government.

Fifthly, the levying of campaign contributions upon state employes as practiced during the past year makes urgent a permanent tenure of office of public employees and their election upon a merit basis alone. It is probable that the Chandler administration will stand or fall depending upon its handling of this and the taxation question.

Finally, the allegations of fraud in the recent election make more manifest the urgent need for a closer check and supervision of elections. Especially is raised the question of state wide registration of the qualified electorate and of the voting machine.

This is a brief catalogue of some of the outstanding questions which will confront the new administration when it assumes the reins of government on January, 1936. It requires no gift of prophecy to say that not only will the fate of the new governor and his colleagues be at stake but likewise the future economic political and educational future of the Commonwealth. It is, therefore, the duty of every citizen to become aware of the issues. The source of enlightenment and intelligent action is Kentucky's history. It must be utilized in mastering these stubborn questions. It will require a task not seemingly rarely found in Kentucky to meet these problems adequately. The Kentucky Academy of Social Science throws a few gleams of light upon the baffling darkness which surrounds Kentucky today. If it succeeds in doing that it will have accomplished its purpose.



Dr. Barton

HOW ARE You TODAY

DR. JAMES W. BARTON

Talks About

Dangers of Overweight

WHEN a surgical operation becomes an accepted method and becomes immediately necessary there is no time to fetidce the overweight patient to a normal weight. The slower the blood pressure or strengthen the heart muscle but the overweight and the unassembled just have to go ahead and hope for the best.

Just how many of these patients come through their operations successfully I have no means of knowing, but after operation in the overweight just as it is just average food which is not likely ever to be needed, and the fat is not likely ever to be needed, and the fat is not likely ever to be needed, and the fat