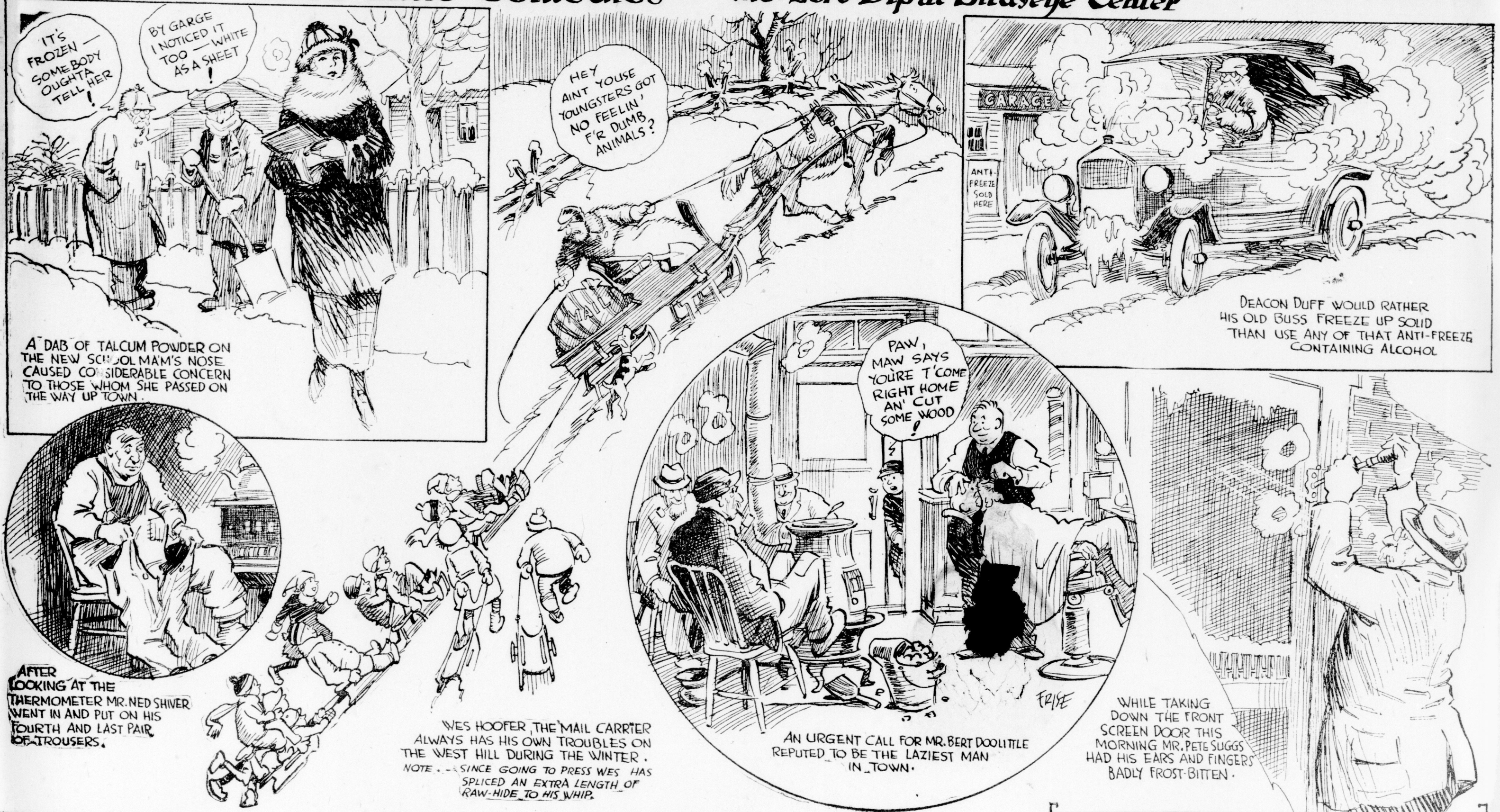


# Life's Little Comedies ~ The Zero Dip at Birdseye Center



## Daudet Mystery Thrills All France Suicide or Anarchist Assassination?

Young Son of Royalist Leader and Grandson of Author of "Sappho" is Found Dead in a Paris Taxicab—Shot, Kept Secret—Father Says It Was Not Suicide, But Political Murder.



PHILIPPE DAUDET  
SUICIDE OR MURDERED

ALL France is thrilled just now by the Daudet affair, which will go down into history with the Dreyfus affair, the Mme. Steinheil case, the Calmette-Cailhau business, and other famous French crimes and mysteries.

Philippe Daudet, fifteen-year-old son of Leon Daudet, deputy and leader of those who seek to restore the monarchy in France, and grandson of Alphonse Daudet, celebrated author of "Sappho," was found shot to death in a Paris taxicab.

Did young Daudet, bearer of one of the most illustrious names in all France, commit suicide of his own volition, shrinking from carrying out the appalling task to which he had pledged himself, killing his own father? Or did he commit suicide because his new-found nihilistic compatriots, older and more experienced than himself, had impressed upon his unreliable brain that it was his duty to do so?

Daudet's son was dead a week and had been buried in consecrated ground, with all the ceremonies of the Catholic church, when the Anarchists declared he had not died in bed at all after the "short illness" which had been announced. In a special edition of the Anarchist weekly, *Le Libertaire*, Georges Vidal had the news spread through Paris that the son of Leon Daudet, Royalist and Catholic, had really died an Anarchist and suicide.

Leon Daudet was convulsed with anguish and rage. He knew his son had really died from a bullet through the brain, but he thought he had succeeded in suppressing the news completely "by order" of his son. Poincaré after a little urging, his son had run away from home repeatedly during the past four years, impelled by epileptic moods which he could not control and, after the last runaway of five days, his father discovered his body among the unidentified dead at the Lariboisière Hospital.

He was told: "This young man committed suicide yesterday afternoon in a taxicab on the Boulevard Magenta." His son's morbid condition made suicide such a natural explanation of his death that Leon

Daudet's only thought was how to conceal it.

**Scandal Brought Home**

DAUDET's great power as a politician is based on his complete collection of the private scandals of public men, and now the Anarchists appeared with a scandal even greater than he had suspected—and in his own home. They declared his own son had joined the Anarchists and spent two days with them before his death.

They produced a letter to his mother in which he recognized his son's handwriting, saying: "I have been an Anarchist for a long while without daring to say it." And they went so far as to say his son, in devotion to the Anarchist cause, had proposed to assassinate his own father. This was his eldest son, Philippe, well known, whom he adored and called "My Little Brother."

Leon Daudet recalled how militant Philippe had been in the Royalist organization, the "Camelots du Roi." It was only a few months since he had thrashed a classmate at the college of Louis-le-Grand for criticizing his father's politics.

He would not believe this son had been an Anarchist. He could not afford to believe it. His imagination, which has produced distinguished romances as well as political diatribes, began to work furiously to discredit Georges Vidal's account of how Philippe had entered the offices of *Le Libertaire* and made his profession of anarchy.

The theory of assassination took shape and within an hour it was a conviction in Leon Daudet's mind. Philippe had gone to the Anarchists only to gain their confidence and then strike them down. His letter was only a blind—a ruse. But the Anarchists had found him out, with their diabolic cunning, and they had contrived his death. Vengeance must be had.

In the days which have passed since the first amazing announcement by the Anarchists, these two opposing and heroic explanations of Philippe's death have become articles of faith in the opposing political camps. To the Anarchists Philippe is an Anarchist martyr. To the royalists he is a royalist martyr. Both parties are advocates of violence and both have shed each other's blood before.

**Public Taking Sides**

NOW the greatest imagination and provocative ability are in action on both sides and they are whipping each other into a Gallic fury. The French public is taking sides for one explanation, or for the other, and the elections in a few months will undoubtedly be influenced by this accusation of crime just as they were a generation ago by the Dreyfus "affaire."

Poincaré himself is disturbed by his role in it. Not only was it at his orders, in compliance with Daudet's request, that the police first suppressed the news when the supposed young suicide was identified as Philippe Daudet. A few days later, when he was buried ceremoniously "after a short illness," M. and Mme. Poincaré were in attendance at the funeral.

The mystery is complicated by the political lying and exaggeration by

both anarchists and royalists and by the fact that the principal actor, Philippe, was known to be in an abnormal mental state. The greatest detective in France, Faralle, has been set to work with full authority to do anything he sees fit.

In the duel of wits between Vidal and Leon Daudet, the former made make but one or two circumstantial slips in the present battle of newspaper articles and some member or members of his anarchist group will be escorted to the guillotine as the assassin of the boy.

French justice is particularly sensitive to infamy and the powerful Daudet has need to have some head chopped off by order of the French Republic for his son's death. Otherwise he must postpone his hopes of overthrowing the republic and seating Philippe of Orleans on the throne of France, with himself as kingmaker.

Philippe Daudet wrote a small sheaf of prose poems which he left with the anarchists. He had never shown them to his family and, when the anarchists published them, his father, Leon Daudet, considered them so good that he denied them.

The thought was too mature, he said, and the style too fine for his young son. Later, however, Pierre Leconte, who had been Philippe's closest friend at the college of Louis-le-Grand, came forward with the information that Philippe showed him some of the poems one day after class.

This classmate also says that Philippe was devoted to his father and feared for him. He says Philippe cried out recently after an attempted assassination: "O Pierre, these beasts of anarchists will kill him or me one day."

Philippe's mind had imagination drove him once to Marseilles, where he was about to take passage to South America, when he recovered his normal mind. This time he has been traced from his home directly to Havre, where he discussed going to Canada and found he had not enough money. Then he went directly back to Paris, and from the railroad station directly to the offices of the anarchist weekly, *Le Libertaire*.

The solution of the mystery will depend upon discovering his experiences between that time and the afternoon of November 24, when a taxi chauffeur on the crowded Boulevard Magenta called a policeman and said: "My passenger has just shot himself."

It was Mme. Daudet, his mother, whose anxious eye found a few lines buried in the Petit Parisien next morning saying: "A young man attempted suicide in a taxicab on the Boulevard Magenta by firing a bullet into his head." The Petit Parisien pressed the news when the supposed young suicide was identified as Philippe Daudet. A few days later, when he was buried ceremoniously "after a short illness," M. and Mme. Poincaré were in attendance at the funeral.

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### "Perfume of The Damned"

Some of the poems left by Philippe Daudet with the Anarchists and published as "The Perfume of The Damned." Translation to indicate general style and thought.

In the Fireplace  
The wind rattles,  
I am alone in the house, deserted,  
And close to the fire.

It is a person this fire  
When you are afraid.

The spirals of my pipe spread  
about me  
In an impassable morass.  
It is the ooze of my soul which  
is rising to the surface.  
It horrifies me  
And attracts me.

Now the flaming cavalier has  
faded.  
Only a pale blue flame remains.  
It is the seigneur of the damned  
angels  
Who presides at the slow sarabande  
of my evil thoughts.

To a Skull  
You alone are happy in death.  
Nothing can be taken from you.  
You are unaware of love  
And its tortures.  
You are so happy  
You smile eternally.

was only two days later when the royalist paper, *L'Action Française*, announced the death of Philippe Daudet, "after a short illness," that they suddenly had an intuition of the truth.

Philippe connected their unknown "Philippe" with the young suicide and with "Philippe Daudet." For four days, they say, they carefully verified their judgment and then they revealed the scandal.

**Vidal's Story**

THIS is the story the Anarchist poet, Georges Vidal, tells, and it excites the royalists to a murderous rage:

He says a young man who seemed to him about twenty years of age came to the offices of *Le Libertaire* in a super-excited condition, declaring: "The social system revolts me. Life has no more interest for me. Help me to leave it with a sublime gesture of renunciation."

Vidal swears the young unknown proposed first to enter some police station and shoot down policemen as long as cartridges lasted. Then he asked what the Anarchists thought of having him go to some tea-dance to shoot down as many dancing men as possible. "He implored us to tell him what would be most useful in our cause." Among other possibilities he proposed to assassinate Millerand, Poincaré or Daudet.

For two days the Anarchists declared they tried to soothe the young man. Then he left them a letter and a small sheaf of manuscript, saying:

### Man---And This Monkey Business

"Use these if you hear of me through the newspapers." They knew him simply as "Philippe," and they say they did not discover he was Philippe Daudet until after his death.

The Anarchists say they never saw him again after his departure from the *Libertaire* office that Friday. Georges Vidal was to meet him that night at a cabaret known as Le Grélier du Gringorie, but he arrived too late. The young man had gone, leaving a note: "I have borrowed 35 francs here, please repay from the money I left with you on deposit."

It was on the afternoon of the next day that Philippe Daudet was turned over to the police, dying with a bullet hole through his brain. The Anarchists say they had no reason to think that "Philippe" might have committed suicide until they noticed a few lines devoted to an unidentified young man in a taxicab. A "comrade" was sent to investigate, but the hospital refused all information.

Two days later, when the royalist newspaper *L'Action Française* announced Philippe Daudet had died "after a short illness," the Anarchists made what appears an extraordinary guess, if they had no intimation of the identity of their own "Philippe" and if the hospital had successfully denied them any information concerning the unidentified suicide, as they declare.

Daudet accuses the advocates of malignant nihilism of suborning his son for vengeance because he, Leon Daudet, had caused the arrest of a girl, Germaine Berthon, an anarchist, who tried to kill Leon Daudet. Or, more simply, the elder Daudet claimed, and denouncing Leon Daudet, said he had murdered his son, either outright or by suggestion, giving him a revolver wherewith to shoot himself, and thereby adequately avenging themselves upon the boy's father.

The Anarchists say he admired the act of Germaine Berthon, the young Anarchist who finally shot Leon Daudet but who finally shot himself.

Plateau dead because he was a Royalist. During his trial every Anarchist had been discussing her admiration for the girl, and denouncing Daudet. Did Philippe admire her and speak of assassinating his father simply to agree with the conversation, or did the conversation have a suggestive effect on his temporarily unbalanced mind?—New York World.

**"I'm the Boy"**

A BUSINESS man directed one of his clerks to hang out a sign, "Boy Wanted." Five minutes later a red-headed youngster appeared in the office with the sign under his arm.

"Mister," he demanded, "did you hang this out?"

"I did," was the stern reply. "Why did you tear it down?"

The boy gazed in wonder at the man.

### Wants More Bachelors, Patriotic Duty for Men

IN England it is almost necessary for a self-respecting man to forego marriage, according to J. Fort Williams, M. P., who made this statement in amplification of his defense of bachelors recently at a fashionable London wedding at which he acted as best man. He deplored the bridegroom for deserting the ranks of bachelorhood at a time when the fight was the keener and his statements aroused the ire of most of the West End mammas.

"In England we have a population of 618 to the square mile, as compared with two in the colonies and ten in America," he said. "Now you understand why I call bachelors blessed."

"There is at the moment a tendency among men not to marry. They find it too expensive a luxury. Also at the moment taxation favors the bachelor. Despite the evergreen suggestion that bachelors should be taxed, I am against the taxation."

"Compulsory marriage as suggested for England is absurd. My real argument for bachelors is that the population is increasing at the rate of 1,000 a day. We have a million and

have negroes black skins and kinky hair? Why has the Mongolian slant eyes? But all these are arguments in favor of the belief that man had an origin of several sources. The mere existence of them strengthens rather than weakens the evolution theory."

Professor McMurich emphasized two things. One, that the different glacial periods did not interrupt evolution. At no time since life appeared on the earth was glaciation complete. Parts of the earth remained free from ice. In these life went on. His second point was that it was impossible to set time correctly in the matter of evolution. The time of the Java man, Pithecanthropus, is placed at 500,000 years ago by the geologists. He might have lived much earlier than that, or much later. What did a few tens of thousands of years one way or the other matter anyway? They did not affect the fundamental premises of evolution.

"This much is certain," concluded Professor McMurich, "evolution is stronger to-day and more firmly believed in than it ever was before. Even to think of suppressing it by legislative act shows a lack of understanding that is lamentable. I think from the standpoint of the organic world everything we have done in the last sixty years has buttressed Darwin's thinking. All our lines of investigation have been determined by the theory of evolution. Think of what the physicists have been doing, changing uranium into lead, changing our ideas of atoms—all evolution. It runs throughout philosophy. It is seen in everyday life. You cannot get away from it."

**No Place for Reason**

THE scene of this little incident was laid in a mining town "out west." It was one of those little groups of shacks that spring up so rapidly, almost overnight, when any new deposits of gold are discovered. Two prospectors had met to have a drink and a chat when the day's work was done.

"I hear that Black Jake went to Casey's saloon last night and shot four men," remarked one man to the other.

"What for?" asked the second man.

"What for?" said the first. "Is this town gettin' that darn civilized that a fellow's got to give a reason for every little thing he does?"