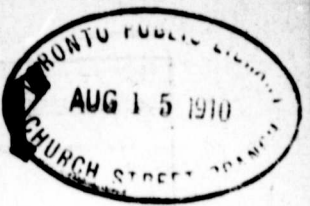


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ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF MAYOR GAYNOR.

THE attempt to assassinate the Mayor of New York was one of the most atrocious of stupid crimes ever perpetrated. Criminals of the Gallagher type seem to be animated largely by insane jealousy of men who are greater, better or more prosperous than themselves. In Europe monarchs and prime ministers are the favourite targets of these weaklings. In America the Lincolns, Garfields, McKinleys and Gaynors, men who have been prominent chiefly through devoted and faithful public service, are the preferred victims of half-imbeciles like Booth, Guiteau, Csolgoss and Gallagher. The incident (we hope it is only an incident) has brought out a marvellous public tribute to the worth of Mayor Gaynor. Men and papers which opposed his election and life-long political opponents, are joining with his warmest supporters in testifying to the fact that he has made the best chief magistrate that New York ever had. The explanation of this remarkable phenomenon is that everyone recognizes that Gaynor was hated by a certain element, and was shot, simply because he did his duty; because he served the public too faithfully and too well. His fate has its consolations:

"How can a man die better
Than in fighting fearful odds;
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his gods?"

In these latter days it is more creditable, if not more dramatic, to die fighting against the forces of evil, which threaten, which imperil, and work actual havoc among the present generation. Mayor Gaynor has had a high tribute paid to his character by the attack of a man who is a mixture of fool and worthless scoundrel. The prisoner's explanation of his motive is ridiculous and utterly unworthy of belief.

What is the moral of the story? You cannot hope to eradicate evil instincts and stupidity quickly by legislation or by any taking thought for the morrow. We have no more hope of this than Lady Leigh had that her son had killed the devil when he broke his slate over the school-master's head. But there must be a moral to a story. There always is. The moral is that mayors and aldermen who allow half-crazy dock-laborers and everybody else (all lunatics and criminals included) to own revolvers, are challenging fate. In this respect Chicago is a long way ahead of New York—or Montreal. You cannot, in Chicago, sell, buy, own, lend, give away or have in your possession a revolver or other deadly weapon without a license from the mayor. And you cannot get a license with-

out giving exceedingly good reasons why you should be trusted with a weapon which is useful to very few except fools and criminals. Practically in a big city nobody but bank messengers and policemen on special duty have any legitimate use for revolvers. The average citizen can use it to shoot his wife, his mother-in-law, or his little sister, or to commit suicide. Or he can leave it around for the children to play with. That is about all the use he gets out of it. In sparsely settled country districts the case is different. The record of deaths, accidental and otherwise, in Montreal during the last thirty years from revolver shots would make a long and ghastly list; and it would be difficult to find two cases in which the weapon did any good.

BOGUS SILVER COINAGE.

American enterprise is positively irrepressible. It is hard to keep a good man down; it is impossible to keep a good American from the profitable exertion of his indefatigable industry, if he feels like exerting it. A European would find the atmosphere of a prison exceedingly discouraging to commercial or manufacturing enterprise. To an American it is simply stimulating. The authorities of the State prison at Charlestown, Mass., have just discovered that three of the prisoners, one of them in for twenty-five years, have for a long time been engaged in the manufacture and distribution of bogus half-dollars, which it is naively reported or confessed, have been circulated in the jail, and that "some had got outside." It speaks volumes for the discipline of the State prison that an industry of this kind, or of any other kind, could be carried on within its walls. If our esteemed neighbours cannot prevent convicts actually in prison from manufacturing half-dollars from scraps of tin and lead, how on earth can they hope to prevent the coining of half-dollars from real silver by coiners who are at liberty? Bearing in mind that the silver coinage of the United States is only token money, in which the actual value of the silver is small compared with its token value, there is an enormous margin for profit in the illicit manufacturing of silver coins from real silver. It would be an interesting thing for the Census Department or the Treasury Department of the United States to institute an investigation into the amount of silver coinage in existence in the United States and compare it with the amount known to have been turned out by the government mints. We fear the result, if approximately accurate, would be startling.