



CRIMINALS AND BRAINS



THE STAMP ACT CONGRESS

NEW YORK, Oct. 7, 1765.—James Otis
"I would also move that Congress instruct Benjamin Franklin, who is now in London, to explain to the Government that the Americans are firm and united on this question."

Delegate: "I second the motion."

President: "It is moved and seconded that all merchants pledge themselves to import no more goods from England until the Act is repealed, that the Sons of Liberty Clubs promise to buy no more British-made articles and that Congress instruct Benjamin Franklin to explain to the Government that Americans are firm and united on this question. Are you ready for the question?"

They were.

That was the first boycott and precedent for all the rest.

—I'm afraid California goods will not find a ready market until California releases from her prisons men unjustly convicted.—T. B. S.

No doubt owing to the fact that we have laws, which way we turn, in inexhaustible quantities, (of a quality that is the despair of all those not gifted with a legal mind) —we find that people are beginning to take the laws into their own hands, quite ignoring the fact that laws are made, not to be fondled, but to look at.

Shattered laws bestrew our land from North Dakota to Gary, Indiana, and our housekeepers are threatening to resign unless folks relinquish their hold upon the statutes of our Social Economy.

Now the breaking of those laws cannot

be classed with the smashing of furniture, where the husband or wife relieves the monotony of personal encounter with intent to commit-grand-personal-injury and mayhem of first degree. Neither can it be classed with the busting open of a mud turtle in order to explore the contents of the positive and negative shells of that peace loving quartered.

No, the busting of laws is a crime similar to that of knocking an idol off its pedestal or caving in the gold-plated pate of a pewter god. Busting a law is like stealing your friend's wife while he is after a can of beer, or throwing acid into the face of a former sweetheart—a most heinous crime!

It cannot be said that laws are broken accidentally like stepping on a cat's tail or cracking a watch-crystal—No. It is done deliberately and almost cheerfully (that's what get's my goat) no malice is indicated. People casually crush a law in their hands like a peanut shell while talking with an acquaintance, in a most unconcerned way—hardly realizing the destruction they are creating. Yes, almost absent-mindedly they pick up a law—a small innocent law that hasn't "broken its eye-teeth," to say nothing of wisdom teeth—and they crush the very life from its body.

No wonder our most public spirited citizens, Americans like Busick, are demanding that molars (teeth) be put in these laws; "let the dentist work on 'em and outfit 'em with fangs."

"Are Criminals Brain-Cripples," discourses the Literary Digest lugubriously. I'd like to answer the Lit. but ye editor, of course, will say. Tut, Tut, so I will merely ask: Are Americans Negroes?—They are, but not all of them.

What difference does it make—are they or are they not? "What Caused Them to Become Such," that's what I'd like to know?

Do criminals wear skirts? They do, Mr. L. Digest, they do—but not all of them, of course.

But we're not concerned about such extraneous matter . . . we don't care "do they wear skirts" or no, we want to know why do bob-hair bandits bandit. Are senators "brain-cripples"? We're not interested. We want to know the cause of their mis-

fortune, if so. Are Laborers Brain Cripples? Are they stomach-paupered? Are they shoulder-bound? All these questions are immaterial, irrelevant and beside the premise. We want to know what cripples them, if so; what impoverishes their guts, if so; and what binds their shoulder blades—if so?

Are Criminals Brain Crippled? Are Editors Deficient Mentally? Why?—That's it!

Who's Crippled Criminally?—Ah! A subject at last:—Business is improving gradually and shortly there will be no need for the failing merchant to step out and hold up working men on pay-night. Laborers soon may wend their way home in safety hugging their pay-envelopes to their breast, for business is on the up-grade. In a very short time now "bills falling due" will have no horrors for the surplus business-element, the horde of shop-keepers, more-successful merchants will now lock up their places with more confidence, since the pressure is being relieved from the shoulders of their more unfortunate brothers.

Some might argue, and have done so, that the loot divided pro rata among the business element is not sufficient to reach around; for some reason or other. But I, after careful review, am disposed to think that it is not a question of loot. It is a question entirely of support and non-support—for labor, in its hours of unemployment, cannot possible support over many merchants.

And so Literary Digest inquires: Are Criminals Brain-Cripples?

Not many of them, "Dige."

And so, too, T-Bone Slim inquires:

What is a business man to do, who has a large family, bills coming due, cash register unresponsive, and no customers haunting his place—and his brain crippled—what does he do?

"GOD KNOWS!"

Does he get an honest job?

God knows he doesn't.

What does he do?

Are Criminals Brain-Cripples?

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