

ROSEBURG NEWS-REVIEW

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STATE PRESS COMMENT

Grubstake From U. S.

(Morning Oregonian)

The Southwestern Oregon Min-
ing association has decided to ask
the little white father at Wash-
ington, D. C. to become the grubstake
for gold miners.

And, so far as that is concerned,
the little white father has made
worse business ventures of late,
and a lot of worse ventures with-
out even a pretense of business
about them. We can see the reason-
ableness of the miners' argument.

If the white father is willing to
grubstake millions of people with-
out the least prospect of return,
why shouldn't he take over from
private speculators the increasing-
ly heavy and unprofitable burden
of financing the gold hunters on
their regular scouring of the hills?

Nevertheless, there are dangers
ahead for such a program. Certain-
ly it would tend to make depend-
ent out of one of the most inde-
pendent classes of men America
has known. And the policy, once
started, would be very likely to
become permanent. The prospect-
ors, taking them by and large, are
more interested in the hunting
than in the finding. They desire
only to have their little outfit,
with food enough and clothes
enough, and to be permitted, thus
accounted, to search for gold to
the ends of their lives. As mat-
ters stand today, they are limited
only by the necessity of the grub-
stake. On the one hand, the pro-
fessional grubstakers are progres-
sively more careful; on the other
hand, the creeks and diggings
where the prospectors have been
accustomed to make their own
grubstakes are progressively less
productive.

It is true that the financing of
the prospectors is more and more
difficult. It also is true that the
nation as a whole has an interest
in developing any gold resources
not as yet discovered. But the pro-
gram would create a new class of
dependents and ruin a fine tradi-
tion of independence. Besides, it
would shift to the government an
expense that always has been borne
by the mining industry and the
private speculators, and which they
should bear.

One interesting fact of the Fish-
er-Clark race is the lack of grati-
tude displayed by the Townsend
organization. Senator Fisher's re-
cord in the legislature with respect
to Townsend plan legislation is a
record that the most ardent Town-
sendite should approve. And yet,
the Townsends have endorsed
Mayor Clark and have printed
"tickets" with his name on them.

For representatives in the legis-
lature from this county, this news-
paper has no hesitancy in express-
ing the belief that Glenn N. Riddle
and Bernard A. Young are the best
two, out of the four candidates for
those positions. Riddle is experi-
enced and a man who fights for
and votes his convictions. Young,
though inexperienced, has excel-
lent personal and educational qual-
ifications. Young also thoroughly
knows the county and its needs.

Two able young attorneys seek
the office of district attorney. Maurice Hallmark, serving now as
district attorney by appointment is
opposed by young J. V. Long. Nei-
ther of these men has age or ex-
perience enough to handle a dis-
trict attorney's office in an area
where there is much crime or a
lot of trial work for the district
attorney, but in this county of law
abiding citizens such work is at
a minimum. Either one of these two
young men is capable of handling
the office of district attorney.

Every county office except that
of county coroner is hotly con-
tested. All county offices are im-
portant, of course, but of the lot,
the offices of sheriff and of coun-
ty commissioner are most im-
portant. The commissioners, mem-
bers of the county court, manage
the county's business. The sheriff
is responsible not only for law en-
forcement in the county but is the
tax collector. For these two offices
we shall express a definite pre-
ference. For the others, though we
hold definite opinions, they need
not occupy space here.

It is easy to endorse the candi-
date of W. W. Willis for county
commissioner. Willis is an able
business man and an energetic
worker. If elected he will make a
good commissioner. In addition to
Willis' qualifications is the fact
that he represents southern Doug-
las and that area is entitled to rep-
resentation on the court.

For sheriff the preference is for
Percy A. Webb, present sheriff
and an able executive. He is experi-
enced and has demonstrated his
ability to conduct the office in an
efficient and economical way.

A week from today is election
day. May the best men win. The
News-Review has abundant faith
in the good judgment of the voters
and will accept without complaint
the will of the majority. Possibilities

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THE BIG FOUR

A Mystery-Romance by Agatha Christie

CHAPTER XIV

"Excuse me, gentlemen, for my
somewhat unceremonious entry,"
the stranger said in a soft voice,
"my business is of a rather un-
orthodox nature."

Smiling, he advanced to the table
and sat down by it. I was about to
spring up, but Poirot restrained me
with a gesture.

"As you say, monsieur, your
entry is somewhat unceremonious.
Will you kindly state your busi-
ness?"

"My dear M. Poirot, it is very
simple. You have been annoying
my friends."

"In what way?"

"Come, come, Monsieur Poirot.
You do not seriously ask me that?
You know as well as I do."

"It depends, monsieur, upon
who these friends of yours are."

Without a word, the man drew
from his pocket a cigarette case,
and opening it, took out four cig-
arettes and tossed them on the
table. Then he picked them up
and returned them to his case,
which he replaced to his pocket.

"Ah!" said Poirot, "so it is like
that, is it? And what do your
friends suggest?"

"They suggest, monsieur, that
you should employ your talents—
your very considerable talents—in
the detection of legitimate crime—
return to your former avocations,
and solve the problems of London
society ladies."

"A peaceful program," said Poi-
rot. "And supposing I do not
agree?"

The man made an eloquent ges-
ture.

"We should regret it, of course,
exceedingly," he said. "So would
all the friends and admirers of the
great M. Hercule Poirot. But re-
grets, however poignant, do not
bring a man to life again."

"But very delicately," said Poi-
rot, nodding his head. "And sup-
posing I—accept?"

"In that case I am empowered to
offer you—compensation."

He drew out a pocket-book, and
threw ten notes on the table. They
were for ten thousand francs each.

"That is merely as a guarantee
of our good faith," he said. "Ten
times that amount will be paid
you."

"Good lord," I cried, springing
up, "you dare to think—"

"Sit down, Hastings," said Poi-
rot automatically. "Subdue your so
beautiful and honest nature and sit
down. To you, monsieur, I will say
this. What is to prevent me ring-
ing up the police and giving you
into their custody, whilst my
friend here prevents you from es-
caping?"

"It all means so so if you think
it advisable," said our visitor
calmly.

"Oh! look here, Poirot," I cried.
"I can't stand this. Ring up the
police and have done with it!"

Rising swiftly, I strode to the
door and stood with my back
against it.

"It seems the obvious course,"
murmured Poirot as though de-
bating with himself.

"But you distrust the obvious,
eh?" said our visitor, smiling.

"Go on, Poirot," I urged.

"It will be your responsibility,
mon ami."

As he lifted the receiver, the
man made a sudden, cat-like jump
at me. I was ready for him. In
another minute we were locked to-
gether, staggering round the room.

Suddenly I felt him slip and fal-
ter. I pressed my advantage. He
went down before me. And then,
in the very flush of victory, an ex-
traordinary thing happened. I felt
myself flying forwards. Head first,
I crashed into the wall in a com-
plicated heap. I was up in a mo-
ment, but the door was already
closing behind my late adversary.

I rushed to it and shook it. It was
locked on the outside. I seized
the telephone from Poirot to warn
the desk with:

"This is Hastings. Stop a man
who is coming out. A tall man,
with a buttoned-up overcoat and a
soft hat. He is wanted by the po-
lice."

Very few minutes elapsed before
we heard a noise in the corridor
outside. The key was turned and
the door flung open. The manager
himself stood in the doorway.

"The man—you have got him?"
I cried.

"No, monsieur. No one has de-
scended."

"You must have passed him,"
said Poirot. "We have passed no one,
monsieur. It is incredible that he can
have escaped."

"You have passed some one, I
think," said Poirot, in his gentle
voice. "One of the hotel staff, per-
haps?"

"Only a waiter carrying a tray,
monsieur."

"Ah!" said Poirot, in a tone
that spoke infinitely.

"So that was why he wore his
overcoat buttoned up to his chin,"
mused Poirot, when we had finally
got rid of the excited hotel offi-
cial.

"A fully sorry Poirot," I
murmured, rather crestfallen. "I
thought I'd done him all right."

"Yes, that was a Japanese trick,
mon ami. All went according to
plan—his plan. That is what I
wanted."

"Fate is playing into our
hands. We must start at once—
though. What stupendous luck."

"So that was why he came,"
murmured Poirot. "I see it all
now."

Poirot looked at me, and slowly
shook his head, smiling as he did
so.

"Will you walk into my parlor,"
said the spider to the fly? That
is your little English nursery
rhyme, is it not. No, no—they are
subtle—but not so subtle as Her-
cule Poirot."

"What on earth are you driving
at, Poirot?"

"My friend, I have been asking
myself the reason of this morning's
visit. Did our visitor really hope
to succeed in bribing me? Or,
alternatively, in frightening me in-
to abandoning my task? It seem-
ed hardly credible. Why, then, did
he come? And now I see the whole
plan—very neat—very pretty—the
ostensible reason to bribe or
frighten me—the necessary strug-
gle which he took no pains to
avoid, and which should make the
dropped pocket-book natural and
reasonable—and finally—the pit-
fall! Rue des Eschelles, 11 a. m.?

I think no, mon ami. One does
not catch Hercule Poirot as easily
as that."

"Good heavens," I gasped.

Poirot was frowning to him-
self.

"There is still one thing I do not
understand."

"What is that?"

"The time, Hastings—the time.
If he wanted to decoy me away,
surely night time would be better?
Why this early hour? Is it possible
that something is about to hap-
pen this morning? Something
which they are anxious Hercule
Poirot should not know about?"

He shook his head.

"We shall see. Here I sit, mon
ami. We do not stir out this morn-
ing. We await events here."

It was at half-past eleven exact-
ly that the summons came. A petit
coursier. Poirot tore it open, then
handed it to me. It was from Ma-
dame Olivier, the world-famous
scientist, whom we had visited
yesterday in connection with the
Halliday case. It asked us to
come out to Passy at once.

We obeyed the summons with-
out an instant's delay. Madame Oli-
vier received us in the same small
salon. I was struck anew with the