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The verdict of the Pender jury was something of a surprise to the people. Owing to the fact that the evidence was entirely circumstantial it was generally believed that the jury would not bring in a first degree verdict but would compromise on second degree or manslaughter. When Judge Eakin told the jury that no compromise could be effected except a genuine change of opinion, there remained nothing for the jury to do except bring in the verdict they did or a verdict of acquittal. The jurymen who tried Pender are to be congratulated for their work. They were chosen from the body of the people and listened for three weeks to the mass of circumstantial evidence which connected Pender with the dastardly and heinous crime. There has been no intimation that any influence of any kind, other than the evidence itself and the arguments of the attorneys, was used in an effort to direct any kind of a verdict.

The jury was a good one. It was composed of fair-minded, intelligent citizens from all parts of the county. They were selected for that fairness after a thorough investigation. They did their duty. They were the judges of the fact and the best judges that could be had. Their verdict was in keeping with their oaths.

Pender was either guilty of the foulest, blackest, most heinous crime ever committed in Columbia county, or he was an innocent man. If he was guilty at all he was guilty of murder in the first degree. The jury after full and fair deliberation and discussion decided that he was guilty and in accordance with their oaths they brought in a verdict. And yet there are some people who still stand around the street corners and say that the jury was wrong. They should not have brought in a verdict which means punishment by death on circumstantial evidence. There yet remains a chance that some other person than Pender might have committed the crime. There are others so sympathetic as to take to heart the verdict and say that it is too cruel to be enforced. Still others who have even suggested that it would be good policy and the right thing to circulate a petition to the Governor to commute the sentence after it has been pronounced.

Two juries, twenty-four citizens of Columbia county, have heard the evidence in this case. Each and everyone of those twenty-four men has been convinced that Pender was the guilty man. The first jury, of course, disagreed, but only upon the ground that first degree murder verdicts should not be returned on circumstantial evidence. There were some men on that jury who were convinced that Pender was guilty, but not so thoroughly convinced as would warrant them, in their judgment, to return a verdict that meant death by hanging. But when twenty-four men after listening to all that evidence are convinced of the guilt, the balance of the people must take it that there was no mistake and that only justice will be done.

A boy 15 years old is in the custody of the sheriff of this county having been picked up with tramps and criminals after stealing milk from back porches and breaking into box cars. His home is in Seattle where he has a father and mother with whom he claims to have had trouble. He is a wanderer on the face of the earth; his parents evidently do not care where he goes or what he does. He is on the downward path, and, unless he is taken hold of, either by his parents or some institution, he will more than likely become a confirmed criminal and an outcast.

A boy 15 years old, the son of respectable and respected St. Helens citizens, has been staying out of school for a couple of weeks, running the streets and loafing around the water front. He has also been getting liquor from some source. He has fallen behind in his studies at school and is fast forming habits and associations that will follow him throughout his life. He has finally stopped going to school; he has induced other boys to enter into a scheme of running away from home and entering upon a life similar to the boy from Seattle.

Two boys, about 15 years old, members of respectable and respected St. Helens families, have fallen in with bad company and started on a tour of the country; attempted to run away from their comfortable and happy homes to become, as is the Seattle boy, wanderers upon the face of the earth. They were induced to attempt such folly on the representations of the other boys who thought they had tasted some of the pleasures of being boss for themselves.

This has been a happening in St. Helens this week. It has caused suffering, trouble and worry to the parents. The scheme is nipped in the bud before execution. The boys have been saved from a well defined start on the downward path. It should be a lesson to them. It should be a lesson to parents, not only of those particular boys, but to all parents of boys. Boys should be kept in school. They should be kept off the streets at unseasonable and unreasonable hours. Teachers and parents should become better acquainted so that each will know what is being done.

Boys who run away from home and go tramping around the country should be taken care of and parents who will knowingly permit their boy to do such things should be required to pay the cost.

For some reason a mistake was made at the school meeting last Monday evening in St. Helens when a levy of only four mills was made for school purposes. On a valuation of \$1,000,000 in round numbers this levy will only raise \$4,000, which is not enough to pay the salaries of the teachers alone. There are nine regular teachers, the combined salaries being \$710 per month or a total of \$6,390 for the nine month's term. That more teachers will be necessary next year there is little question of doubt so that the levy made last Monday night will only a little more than pay the teachers for half the regular term. Other expenses, such as janitor, steam heat, etc., were not provided for. The result will be that the district will issue its warrants for several thousand dollars and pay interest on them when this could have been avoided by a levy high enough to meet the requirements.

The schools must be conducted in a modern manner. Our schools are now numbered among the very best in the state. It will not do to reduce the high standard attained, nor is it good policy to hamper the teachers and directors by a lack of funds, especially when the bills will have to be paid anyway. Such a course will only result in a

higher levy next year to make up the deficiency for this year. It is clear that a mistake was made in the low levy.

A. E. Thompson, sheriff of Columbia county, is entitled to much credit for the bringing to justice of the murderer of Daisy Wehrman and her baby. Ever since the crime was reported to Sheriff Thompson, two days after it was committed, he has left no stone unturned nor permitted any clue to escape which could possibly lead to the apprehension of the murderer. He has worked hard. He has undergone hardships that the people know nothing about. He has won a victory for the cause of justice and is entitled to the commendation and plaudits of the community at large.

E. B. Tongue, the able district attorney who has handled the case from the start, has also established for himself a reputation for ability and fairness that will ever remain with him. He, like the sheriff, has worked hard upon the case. He has investigated every bit of evidence that would be apt to shed any light upon the identity of the murderer. He was fair to all parties. He gave to the jury all the information that was to be given. He is to be congratulated for the able manner in which the case was handled and for the successful prosecution of a man whom a jury of Columbia county citizens has said committed the infamous crime.

Judging from the reports of the proceedings had at Quincy last week the time has arrived when politics is to be a course of study in our public schools. If that is true our public school system is in serious danger. It will only last a short time. But

right thinking people and good American citizens can not believe that such a course will be followed. School directors who will permit such things to be done should be deposed immediately and if any district persists in allowing partisan politics or socialistic doctrines to be instilled into the minds of the children, that district should be dissolved. Other and higher officers who have supervision over such affairs and have it within their power to put an end to such practices, should be prompt and decisive in their action. The Quincy situation is a serious one and demands immediate and decisive action.

The assessed valuation of property in Columbia county was advanced about twenty per cent. over last year's assessment. The tax levy this year will be from twenty to twenty-five per cent. higher than last year. The same rule applies in the state at large. The assessed valuation in nearly every county in the state was advanced nearly twenty per cent. and the state levy for this year promises to be about four times higher than last. What's the why?

Those radiators in the auditorium of the City Hall are very nice to look at, but it requires considerable imagination to keep warm there during an entertainment.

A burglar stole 72 dozen eggs from a store in San Francisco this week. That fellow knew how much money it would take to employ lawyers to keep him out of jail if he was caught, and provided for it.

One reason for being thankful in St. Helens yesterday was that we did not have to be out in that awful rain.

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