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CHEAPENING HUMAN LIFE.

Union county has two murder cases before the court. One comes from Elgin and the other from Union, each community being rural. This is a little strange for one would naturally think that La Grande with its several thousand population would furnish most of the criminal work for the court.

These cases also show that human life is held too cheaply in the minds of some; that the barbarous idea of killing has not been eradicated by these many generations, but still clings in the minds of a certain class. Without doubt everything will be done to bring the guilty ones to proper punishment, for Prosecuting Attorney Ivanhoe is not the kind of a man to let anything slip past which would aid in enforcing law and bringing murderers to justice.

The usual defense for murderers will likely be produced in these cases, but Union county owes it to the remainder of the country and to herself to battle to the end that there may not be a possibility of one who takes human life going free unless guilt fastens can be established without the shadow of a doubt.

It is very unfortunate for this county that these two murders should have occurred, the same as it would be unfortunate for any other county with a similar criminal record.

GREAT AND MIGHTY TEDDY.

Of course he did it.

No one in the west expected anything other than the great T. R. should capture the New York state convention and route the "old guard" completely. He did it with the same oldtime enthusiasm, he did it with his usual ease, and when he had won the world shouted a lusty hurrah for the conqueror.

No one can deny that Roosevelt is a man of destiny. Anything he says goes and apparently will go for some time to come. But there will some day appear governmental problems with which Roosevelt is not sufficiently familiar to advise the people upon. He is not a deep student of political economy, he never wrestled with the tariff question, nor did he ever have the country up against a problem of economy that took statesmanship to solve. His career has been during the rosy days of progress and prospered and he had plenty of time to talk.

If the winds should begin to blow as they did when Grover Cleveland saved this nation's credit against popular wishes, or when Lincoln took a course that was unpopular, or when Major McKinley with his strong right arm held back the clamor for war when this country was unprepared, then we will all see the steady side of Roosevelt if he has a steady side.

Manager Steward has opened the theatrical season at his play house with a good show, and La Grande people continue that confidence in him as of old. The Steward play house is one of the valuable assets of La Grande, for it is run with abiding honesty and faith with its patrons, which means that playgoers are always given the square deal rather than show favoritism to a poor theatrical company.

With Oswald West as democratic candidate it will be necessary for Jay Bowerman to set his face to the "west" during the coming campaign.

It mattered very little whether Harry Lane or John Manning received the congressional nomination for the democrats of the second district. James Harvey Graham of Baker City once received the same recognition without any injurious effects.

Our old friend, Tod Rinehart, showed some speed in Union county when eighty-four of the stalwarts wrote his name for state treasurer. Tod always shows speed at a time when people are least expecting it and when it brings results.

Mr. Bryan resents the action of Teddy in stealing his political thunder, as Mr. Bryan alleges. But Teddy pays no attention to the peerless one and goes on conquering everything that comes in sight. When Bryan cannot receive attention from Teddy how does the New York World expect recognition?

Mr. Lafferty, the congressional nominee for this district, sends a letter to The Observer thanking everyone who voted for him, and while this paper opposed his nomination he wishes us all kinds of good luck. Thanks, Mr. Lafferty, carry the news to Old Pike county, Missouri that one of her sons has been honored by the people of Oregon.

George Cochran's nomination as a member of the board of control in Oregon is one of the worthy actions of republicans. His duties if elected will be wholly confined to water rights with which he is thoroughly familiar. Mr. Cochran is an able attorney, thoroughly square and will prove his worth to the people of Oregon.

Russia.

Russia did not break into European history until compartively recent times. Ruric, a Varengian chief, seems to have been the first to establish a government, about 862. Ruric's descendants ruled amid many ups and downs till 1598, at which time the real history of the country may be said to begin. With the solitary exception of the United States of America, the progress of Russia under Peter the Great and Catherine II. is unequaled for rapidity in the history of the world.

Bringing Down the Average.

"It is said that there are 120,000 hairs on the average human head," said the baldheaded man.

"Too bad that you've pulled the average down so low, my dear," said his wife.—Yonkers Statesman.

THE WAY OF THE SWISS.

Foreigners Regarded as Egyptians and Treated Accordingly.

A foreign resident in Switzerland was fined 10 francs because his little girl had plucked three buttercups growing on a piece of land on which she and some half dozen Swiss children had for years been accustomed to play. The land had recently changed hands, and its new owner had put up a notice forbidding the plucking of flowers. A passing gendarme had found the children flagrante delicto and had forthwith instituted proceedings against the little foreigner, while letting the little natives go scot free. The child's father appealed against the sentence and by dint of hard fighting, which entailed, of course, expense, forced the higher court to reduce the fine from 10 francs to 3—i. e., 1 franc for each buttercup.

When I tried to learn the whys and wherefores of this case I was told by a Swiss that one-half of every fine levied goes to the gendarme who reports the offense for which it is levied, and also that Swiss gendarmes cannot fairly be expected to be quite so alert in taking proceedings against their own country people as against foreigners.

Further, I was told by an American that in Switzerland all foreigners rank as Egyptians and that the one Scriptural injunction that is faithfully obeyed there is that which ordains that Egyptians shall be spoiled.—From "The Latter Day Swiss" in Cornhill Magazine.

A Famous Opal.

The most famous opal in history was that which was worn in a ring by the Roman senator Nonius in the day of the triumvirate. Its size equaled that of a medium sized hazelnut, yet its beauty and brilliancy rendered it a marvel among the dilettanti of Rome, especially when it was known that the goldsmiths and money changers had set its value at $1,000,000. Mark Antony made overtures to Nonius for its purchase, intending, it is thought, to present it to Cleopatra, but the senator refused to part with it and for fear that it would be taken from him by sheer force sought safety in flight. Here history loses all trace of this famous gem, there being no record of its transference from Nonius to any of his family.

At a Wedding Breakfast.

After a marriage recently the bridal party partook of a sumptuous breakfast, toward the end of which a younger brother of the bride got up and said solemnly, raising his glass:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I have to propose a toast, which, however, must be drunk standing. Please take your glasses and rise up."

The guests, although somewhat bewildered, did so.

"Now," said the young scapegrace, "if you will remain standing for a few minutes I'll find out who has been sitting on my new hat."—London Tit-Bits.

Somebody Had.

The peerless statesman then arose;
His slanderers he defied.
He said, as everybody knows,
Somebody 'd lied.

The charge against his honor he—
Well, he almost denied,
But still insisted savagely
Somebody 'd lied.

Meanwhile the wires from the west
Were telling on the side
About a statesman who'd confessed
Somebody lied!

—Chicago Tribune.

Unanswerable.

Ethel had been visiting at a neighbor's.

"I hope you didn't take a second piece of cake, Ethel?" said her mother.

"Yes, I did, mother," replied the child. "You told me never to contradict, and the lady said, 'I know you'll have another piece of cake,' so what could I say?"—Yonkers Statesman.

Misnamed Children.

Russell Sage Montgomery
Spent his coin in Pommery.
Nothing did his assets yield,
And he lies in Potter's field.

Adelina Patti Maher
Never sang a single bar.
In her judgment you'd rejoice
If you ever heard her voice.

Waldo Emerson O'Toole
Never went to any school.
He was plainly marked by fate
For the champion welterweight.

—Widow.

She Had Tried It.

"No," she declared; "I positively will not go out with you in that thing."

"Oh, come on!" he pleaded. "There isn't a bit of danger. The water is as smooth as glass."

"That's all right, but I never have known a man who could manage a canoe with one hand."—Chicago Record-Herald.

A Toast.

Here's to smile and gladness,
Roses wet with dew,
Joy for all our sadness—
Here's to you!

Smiles for all my sorrows,
Gray skies turned to blue,
Hope for all tomorrows,
Just because of you!

—Detroit Free Press.

An Enlightening Diagram.

"How shall I represent this railway that has become noted for erratic dividends?" asked the map maker.

"Put it down as a short and crooked line," replied the chief.—Washington Star.

Another Rubaiyat.

Think, in this muddy stein of simple glass
Whence you and I have quaffed our drink, alas,
Boozer and lush have drunk their sottish fill
And trod the path no sober man shall pass!

—Spokane Spokesman-Review.

Rainy Day Philosophy.

"Cheer up," some one said to Brother Dickey. "The rain falls alike on the just and the unjust."

"Yes," he said, "but de onjest is allus got a umbreller, an' de just man gits de soakin'."—Atlanta Constitution

The Wise Author.

He used to dance with Annie—
She waltzed with fairy grace;
He used to drive with Fannie—
She had such a pretty face;
He used to call on Clara—
She always praised his book,
But he finally married Mary,
For she knew how to cook.

—Chicago News.

OYSTERS ARE LAZY.

They Spend Practically the Whole of Their Lives in Beds.

Just like confirmed invalids, oysters spend their lives in beds. The principal parts of an oyster are salt water and a handsome stomach.

Every oyster has a mother-of-pearl lined overcoat with the moss on the outside. But a Waldorf-Astoria oyster gathers no moss.

Oysters, as a rule, keep their mouths shut, but when they have been in society too long they begin to gape. They are fond of playing games, one of their favorites being ring-around-a-rosy. In this game they join shells in a circle on a plate. They live in the ocean in summer and during the winter months frequent the principal hotels and restaurants, where they have reserved seats on cakes of ice specially prepared for them. They are rarely met with at huskings or church fairs.

An oyster is a conchologist by nature, a bivalve by profession and an appetizer because he cannot help himself. There are girl oysters as well as men oysters; but, so far as is known, one is not superior to the other.

Oysters vary in size according to their circumstances and their bringing up. Some are harder to swallow than others. There is no particular rule about this. But if at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

In June the oysters ought to be as rare as the days.—Thomas L. Masson in Judge's Library.

Beaten to a Mummy.

Until pretty late in the eighteenth century mummies entered into a great variety of drugs, balms and other medicaments. As the genuine mummy was then expensive, recipes were given by many ancient writers for converting human flesh into mummy. Usually only certain portions of the body were used, and these were beaten, dried, macerated and spiced out of all likeness to their natural condition, hence "beaten to a mummy." Numerous allusions are made to the practice in ancient literature, and in an old play, "Bird In a Cage," are the directions, "Make mummy of my flesh and sell me to the apothecaries."

Not So Green.

"Yeou city chaps think yeou are pretty smart, don't yeou?" drawled the farm lad. "Ever been to one of our spelling bees?"

"Never had the pleasure," responded the city boarder.

"Waal, by heck, yeou've missed a lot. Now our favorite catchword is ice."

"Why, that only has three letters. Why should the word ice be so popular?"

"Because it is easy to slip on. Ha, ha, ha!"—Chicago News.

It's Nature.

"I noticed in the store we visited today everybody was crowded around the perfumery counter."

"That's not surprising."

"Why not?"

"Oughtn't perfume naturally to be a scenter of attraction?"—Baltimore American.

The most completely lost of all days is the one on which we have not laughed.—Chamfort.

State Lines.

New York has more Indians left than any other eastern state.

Over 4,000 potato diggers are used in the state of Maine alone to harvest the crop. If these were all hooked together with a team of horses to each it would make a procession fifteen miles in length.

The state of Texas alone could give to every man, woman and child in the whole world a building lot 20 by 100 feet and then, allowing for public highways, have over one-third of the area of the state left for the production of food supplies.

The Sky Men.

The world is up in the air nowadays.—Boston Globe.

Aviation would be perfectly safe but for gravitation and precipitation.—Albany Journal.

Man has again improved on nature by showing his capacity to fly faster than the birds.—New York World.

The aviator may beat the carrier pigeon once in awhile, but for steady work it will be safer to depend on the pigeons.—Indianapolis News.