

THE OBSERVER

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MEMORY RETRACTED.

It is such events as the Elks Memorial services of yesterday that causes one to halt for a moment and think of the past; of the friends who have crossed over; of the events that have dealt both kindly and unkindly with each individual in years gone by.

In C. E. Cochran's eulogy on the departed Elks a sermon marked every line; there was pathos in every utterance, yet withal there was nothing morbid about the eulogy for the all Elks he praised every man for his true worth, admitting his faults and enumerating his virtues.

This was but one of the many beautiful and touching things in the eulogy and those who missed hearing it have reason for regret. No matter how brilliant a man may be there are only a few times when his mind will run in a channel to produce thoughts so thoroughly out of the ordinary and so intensely pure.

WHY UNION MAY WIN THE INSTITUTION.

There is no cause for cessation in the fight for the state hospital for the insane. Not at all, for Union's chances according to our way of thinking are better now than ever. It is now thoroughly understood that the locating board will gather all information pertaining to the three possible locations.

look at dry hills and no streams of water?

Any location chosen around Union will insure pleasant surroundings and a delightful landscape. It will insure land in plenty and of a quality that products from the institution land will go a long way toward feeding those enrolled there.

The fact that merit alone is to be considered in this transaction increases Union's chances ten fold.

ENTERTAIN THRESHERMEN.

The threshermen are coming. Oh, ho. Some of the best fellows on earth in that bunch. They will not want any cut glass or handpainted china on the banquet table, but they will be able to handle a properly prepared roast, at the same time discussing what is best for those who separate the grain from the chaff, and turn the wheat into a marketable product.

Just how many of these hardy men will be here we do not know and that does not matter so much, for there will be enough to make La Grande know they have been here. Our duty as a city is to see that they want for nothing. If they choose to play tiddle-de-winks, why tiddle-de-winks go, but on the other hand if they would rather have a sparring match—let's have it. They are among the good fellows of this earth and La Grande is going to take care of them so they will remember this as the best convention city in Eastern Oregon.

Building of homes in La Grande is something that should never be neglected another season. It is very unfortunate when people are forced to leave a community because they cannot get places to house them. Especially when large lumber mills are at our very door.

Honestly, that census report on the state was a hard blow. But Oregon will survive it and come forth stronger than ever shortly.

Here's hoping Jerry Rusk will land that speakership, for he is amply able to care for it.

Indian Swimmers.

Some of the Indians of South America are powerful swimmers and use the stroke popularly known as the "Australian crawl," which, however, they discovered for themselves.

The Glowworm.

Despite the fact science has been puzzling over the problem for many years—experimenting and analyzing and dissecting—the glowworm's secret is still unsolved. We know very little more about its mysterious lamp—physiologic light the experts call it—than did our forefathers. Even its purpose is still hidden.

Chivalry.

Chivalry is from chevalier and simply means a horseman, originally used to distinguish one who rode from one who went to the wars afoot.

Spider Silk.

Size for size, a thread of spider silk is tougher than a bar of steel. An ordinary thread will bear a weight of three grains. This is as strong again as a steel thread of the same thickness.

A Sacrifice

By ANDREW C. EWING

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I left St. Petersburg in the afternoon. When the guard closed the door of the compartment I was in I noticed a man sitting opposite me give a sigh of relief. Still, he continued to look out the window, as he had been doing, apparently dreading to see something or some one. The train moved out with accelerating motion, and the faster it rolled the more relieved looked my fellow passenger.

Suddenly I heard him give a smothered cry, and, following the direction of his eyes, I saw a man running like a deer to catch the train. The passenger put his head out the window to see the end of the race, drew it in and gasped:

"My God!" "Did he catch the train?" I asked. "He jumped on to the footboard of the last car."

"My friend," I said, "I judge that you are a political refugee."

"Why do you think that?" said the man, stiffening up.

"The man who ran to catch the train is a government official. His object is to arrest you."

"Who are you?" "An American."

"Ah! Americans are our friends. I will tell you. That man, as you say, will arrest me, and I shall be sent to Siberia. Help me!"

"How can I do that?" "We are not unlike—the same height, both light hair and beard, both wear glasses. Give me your traveling coat and your golf cap and put on these Russian clothes. When the train stops an officer will come here to arrest me. But by that time it will be night. I shall pretend to be asleep in my corner with the collar of your coat pulled up about my face and your cap down over my eyes. You say, with a groan of despair, 'I am caught at last, but I will not live to go to the mines!' While they are removing you I shall watch for an opportunity to get away before they discover their mistake."

When the scheme was first proposed to me I had not the remotest idea of perpetrating it. But since it was an hour before the train stopped he had that time to persuade me. I should have yielded, but I was not sure that I would not suffer a long term of imprisonment for interfering in the man's capture. Before we had reached the station he had promised if I would take his place to see that the American minister was made aware of the matter, and as the train slowed down, not being able to resist his pathetic appeals, I adopted his plan.

All happened as he had predicted. As soon as the train stopped the coach door was thrown open and a lantern thrust into the compartment. True to my promise, I cried out in Russian, "I am caught at last, but I will not live to go to the mines!" I was jerked out of the coach and hurried away. What became of the "political" I did not know. I was taken into the station, given a closer inspection and the deception discovered. By the next train I was taken back to St. Petersburg and thrown into prison.

The next morning I asked for writing materials, which were given me, and wrote a note to the American minister, stating that I was an American citizen in a Russian prison and asking his assistance. The day passed and I heard nothing. A week, a month, went by. I gave up hope and cursed myself for a fool.

One morning a young man came to see me, saying that he was from the embassy. I asked him why he had been so long in taking cognizance of my note. He replied that no note had been received, but the very next day after my arrest the minister had been informed of all that had happened. He had since been trying to get the government to take the matter up. I had been twice moved from one prison to another, and each time the embassy had been informed of my removal. In short, my note to the minister had not been delivered, but some one had been keeping watch over me and informing the minister of my condition.

After another month's hard work the embassy succeeded in securing my release on condition that I leave the country immediately. I was escorted over the line, wondering the while whether I had been a fool or a fine fellow. I had no sooner got beyond the border than a man stepped up to me and said, "I am to take you to the count."

"Thanks, no. I don't want to go to any count. I've had enough of this business."

But he persuaded me and took me to a house where I was received by—the man whom I had helped to escape. He rushed forward and gave me a bear hug and kissed me on both cheeks. When his transports had subsided he said:

"I kept my promise. The government tried to lose you, but my friends prevented. After you left me I got out

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of the car and escaped. I have been here ever since. I am a noble, rich and half my fortune is yours.

"No," I said, "It feels so good to have made one sacrificial act that you can't pay me for doing it."

But I found it impossible to get rid of the count's gratitude. I went to Paris and had no sooner arrived than a number of Russians called on me. One offered me a box at the opera, another the use of a house. There was nothing I wished for that was not forthcoming.

NUGGETS OF GOLD

Some of the Largest Ever Struck Were Found by Chance.

THE OLIVER MARTIN CHUNK.

It Was Turned Up by a Miner Who Was Digging a Grave For His Drowned Comrade—A Starving Miner Unearthed the "Welcome Stranger."

Nowhere does fortune induce her love of the dramatic and the sensational more fully than in the gold fields.

Take, for instance, the story of the discovery of the world famous "Blanche Barkley" nugget in the early days of Australian gold mining, which sent a thrill around the world. Samuel Napier, a sailor, with his brother Charles and one Robert Ambrose, their cook and general handy man, had been digging for gold for six months at Kingower, about forty miles from Bendigo, without discovering as much of the precious metal as would pay their living expenses, when one August day, to tell the story in Napier's own words: "We had dug down about fourteen feet to the pipe clay stratum and were shuffling around in the bottom of the shaft more dead than alive from the heat. Old Ambrose lit his pipe and leaned against the side of the hole to rest. Just then I struck something with my pick. I turned it up so the light could strike it, and, by jimmie, it was a chunk of gold as big as a Hubbard squash!" The nugget sold for \$35,000.

Among the thousands who flocked to the Victorian gold fields in the early fifties were two Cornish miners, John Deason and Richard Oates, who staked a claim near the village of Mollaque. They set to work with vigor, confident that in a few months they would be able to retire to their native Cornwall rich men, but their expectations were doomed to cruel disappointment. Not only months, but many years, passed and found them still as far removed from fortune as at the beginning, and

by 1860, fifteen years after they began their search for gold, they were reduced to the last straits. Starvation stared them in the face. In despair the miner seized his pick and wandered away to the outskirts of the gold field, and as he wandered, slowcast and heavy hearted, he noticed a gleam of yellow in a rut made by a peddler's cart. Lifting his pick, with a few frantic blows he brought to light an enormous nugget, which, with all his strength, he could barely raise an inch from the ground. The nugget, which was soon known the world over as the "Welcome Stranger," actually weighed two hundredweight and was sold for nearly \$50,000.

And these were but a few of the many similar blocks of gold discovered in Australia under equally dramatic conditions. While a native shepherd named Kerr was tending his sheep one day his attention was arrested by a yellow rock projecting a few inches above the soil. In his excitement at the discovery he ran to fetch his master. The rock was unearthed and proved to be a nugget of two hundredweight, from which 100 pounds of pure gold were extracted.

A few years later another monster nugget made its appearance at Ballarat. A party of miners had worked a claim to a depth of sixty yards when one of them struck with his pick a hard, irregularly shaped mass, which on being unearthed proved to be a block of almost pure gold twenty inches long, a foot wide and seven inches deep. Its weight was almost one hundredweight and a quarter and its value \$46,025.

It was the periodical discovery at Ballarat of these monster nuggets which first fired the blood of the entire world in the faraway fifties. But even Ballarat has no other romance to rival that of the discovery of two huge nuggets within a few days in the same claim. The story runs that four miners had worked their claim down to about sixty feet when one of them brought to light a nugget weighing nearly one hundredweight and worth \$27,500. In their joy at such a rich treasure trove the men abandoned the diggings and took their nugget with them to England. They had scarcely left Ballarat when their successors in the claim, with almost the first stroke of a pick, turned over another nugget heavier than the first and valued at more than \$35,000.

Of all the romantic stories told of gold discoveries in California not one is more remarkable than that of which Oliver Martin was the hero. For months Martin and a companion named Flower had been prospecting for gold to no purpose. Worn out by hardships and half dead from starvation, they were on the point of abandoning the quest in despair when fate administered her last crushing blow. They were overtaken by a terrible

storm, in which Flower was drowned. Martin, weak though he was, set to work to dig his fallen comrade's grave at the foot of a tree and had dug down barely two feet when his spade struck a hard, unyielding substance, which, to his amazement and delight, proved to be an enormous nugget, the largest ever found on the American continent. The "Oliver Martin Chunk," as it came to be known the whole world over, weighed 151 pounds 8 ounces and was the nucleus of a fortune of a million dollars which Martin accumulated in later years.—Cassell's Saturday Journal.



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