

THE OBSERVER

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ROBERT J. SLATER

The death of Robert J. Slater of Portland takes from the profession one of the most studious, the most conscientious and successful men. That the law is one of the most difficult professions is known to those who essay to make ends meet by that route. It is one of the axioms of law students that law is a jealous mistress and brooks no interference. To be successful in this day and age of agitation, of dissatisfaction with the machinery of the courts, and do it honestly is one of the noblest achievements to which any man may aspire. No profession makes such exacting demands and none pays such small proportionate returns for the real work involved. But all said and done, when he rears a family and provides for them, gives them opportunities of education, he is doing something for the state in a large way, which will be a lasting monument to his good sense and patriotism. He is doing in a practical way what others are not doing by theorizing. In this sense his demise is a distinct loss.

Mr. Slater was born in Corvallis in 1855. He came to Baker county early, and then the family moved to La Grande, where the deceased was educated in the public schools. He was admitted to the bar in 1880 and some years ago went to Pendleton and from there moved to Portland, very recently, for his health. J. D. Slater of La Grande, Architect Slater, Mrs. A. B. Cherry, Mrs. Nellie Neill and his mother, Mrs. A. Slater, are among the relatives who survive an honorable Oregon born and bred man. The state has lost a valuable citizen, his relatives a kind personage, and the communities in which he has lived will long remember R. J. Slater.

Miss Olive of this city and Bertha of Portland are also sisters who survive him.

THE STAGE PREDICAMENT

Alarmed by the recent theatrical slump and the evident declining regard for the drama, not only in London but throughout England, Henry Arthur Jones, the English dramatist, has started a lecture campaign, with the object of seeking a remedy for this situation. Mr. Jones' aim is to bring before the residents of each city the fact of a dying interest in the drama, and to suggest as a remedy the establishment in every large city of an art center theatre devoted to the higher form of the drama, where Shakespearean and other classic plays, can be produced, and where modern

drama of the highest kind can also be presented.

Mr. Jones stated his campaign at Sheffield, where he soon obtained promises of support not only from members of the corporations and their civic bodies, but the Playgoers' club also promised to assist in carrying out the art center plan.

The situation confronting the stage is not of the moment. It is cumulative, and the slump has been coming for many years. Producers and managers have been wont to charge excessive prices for seats. It must be a mighty good play to be worth \$2 of any man's hard earned money. Stars are paid excessive salaries and everything connected with the art has an inflated and false value. Although he is not a legitimate actor and is only a vaudeville performer, Harry Lauder has just signed a contract at \$5,000 a week. No man is worth that much on the stage. The president of the United States is paid much less.

Automobiles and their maintenance, during the past decade have taken away much theatre patronage. Many persons who own and operate cars are obliged to give up other forms of amusement.

Lastly, the movies. The moving picture business during the past few years has been a miracle and a revelation. When great stage stories, such as "Quo Vadis" and "Les Misérables" are thrown upon a screen, with much more elaborate stage settings than the ordinary producer could afford, the legitimate theatre is bound to suffer. Hundreds of persons are employed in the making of these films, and the scenes pictured are much more elaborate than any that could be produced on a single theatre stage.

Miss Wilson's wedding gown had a train three yards long. If it were not for the train there would have been room for several more guests.

A California octogenarian says he has kept youthful by taking plenty of olive oil. But in some cases the cure is worse than the disease.

An aged Muncie, Ind., man has just taken his sixth wife. He probably will refer to her not as his better half, but as his better sixth.

American girls consume annually \$134,000,000 worth of candy. There must be a lot of generous boobs in this country.

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The Farmer's Wife

One of the speakers at the convention of the Ohio Sunday school association at Lima advanced an interesting explanation of the drift of population from the farm to the city. He said:

"In a large percentage of cases it is the farmer's wife who takes the family to town or city. While the farmer has all his wife has few devices in the house for making her labor easier or for saving her strength. Her life is often a drudge."

That there is a good deal of truth in this statement will be evident to any one familiar with actual conditions in the rural districts. Life on the farm is better for the average man than life in the city. But the farmer's wife doesn't fare so well.

Rural free delivery, the parcel post and the telephone are doing their part in making life more agreeable for women in the farming districts. The automobile, with the opportunities it offers for recreation and change of scene, is playing a larger role in rural America than the average city man imagines.

Still it is the farmer's wife who gets the rough end of the deal in the country. Any improvement that tends to make life easier and more pleasant for her is of value to the nation at a time when the need of the right kind of people on the farms is becoming increasingly evident every day.—Cincinnati Times-Star.

Back to Wooden Shoes

With the shortage in the supply of cattle and the increasing prices of hides and leather comes some consolation in the information given out by the United States forest service that there is an increased call for beechwood for the manufacture of wooden shoes. There have been a few made in glass-producing sections and for workers in steel mills, where not grates and floors are common; but now it seems that not only workers in breweries, tanneries and other cold or wet places are beginning to use them, but farmers are falling into line and discarding the "cowhide boot" and other styles of leather footwear.

As a measure of economy the use of wooden shoes has much to commend it, as they cost only 60 to 75 cents a pair and they are said to last for at least two years. Already the business is reported to have reached "considerable proportions," and to time may come when, under the combination of costly leather and cheap wood, "sabotage" will be possible to the disgruntled worker here under the same conditions which gave rise to the name in Europe.

While wooden shoes are not likely to become fashionable, their utility to the wearers of the woolen shoes will not be doubted, and almost any one with a beech tree and a few tools

can make an unlimited supply of them at least be in a measure beyond the reach of the leather and shoemachinery trusts.—New York Tribune.

Why Slight the Carrot?

Why does no poet arise to snig the song of the carrot? This is the carrot season, the time of harvesting the hardest worked vegetable in the kingdom. Much is said in favor of the plethoric pumpkin, the gathering of corn is commonplace theme, but the

poor carrot has been neglected, year after year.

For diversity of use the carrot has pumpkin and corn backed over the garden wall. Men feed carrots to cattle, increasing the dairy output; they feed them to other stock sometimes, improving its temper. A carrot, artificially hollowed with a knife, makes an elegant Japanese vase. Sufficiently hardened by harsh contact with the world, a carrot may be used for a weapon, either operated like a mallet with a handle or hurled like a Russian bomb.

Carrots are sometimes even used for food by human beings. They are a chief ingredient in vegetable soup. Mixed with butter they improve its color. They make better pumpkin pie than pumpkins themselves. Served as Hubbard squash, they make one wonder why squashes were invented.

The answer to the high cost of living cry is carrots. Johnson had his Boswell, whom will the carrot have?

The Knocker.

After God had finished the rattle-snake, the toad and the vampire, He had some awful substance left, with which he made a knocker. A knocker is a two-legged animal with a corkscrew soul, a water-sogged brain and a combination backbone made of jelly and glue. Where other people have their hearts he carries a tumor of rotten principles. When the knocker comes down the street, honest men turn their backs, the angles in heaven take precipitate refuge behind their harps and the devil bar-locks the

gates of hell.—Missouri Brunswick.

A Doctor of the Soil

An important significance attaches to the announcement that the Southern Settlement and Development organization which has headquarters in the city, says the Baltimore American, has engaged Prof. Cyril G. Hopkins as an agricultural expert—a specialist in the treatment of worn-out soils. Prof. Hopkins comes from the agricultural department of the University of Illinois, but he is even better known because of his successful treatment of worn-out soils, as a real farmer rather than as a teacher of the theories of agricultural chemistry.

He is apparently the particular man that the Southern Settlement and Development organization needs in its business, which business in very large degree has to do with making five bales of cotton grow where only one bale can be grown at present. In the old south—the region that lies south of the Mason and Dixon line, and east of the Mississippi river—there is an impoverished land area as big as the German empire, and, though within the past two decades there has been a steady improvement in the worn-out soils of this region, much yet remains to be done. In fact, there is reason to believe that both the average yield of this region, computed over the period of the past ten years, can be more than doubled.

Prof. Hopkins is not merely a theorist concerning the possibility of soil restoration, but one who has made his theories come true. He comes in from the west, where the soil is supposed to yet retain most of its virgin richness.



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