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AUTOCRACY AT HOME.

The police department of La Grande seems to be operating upon an autocratic Kaiserlike theory instead of an American theory. The city administration, including the Municipal Court, seems to be proceeding upon the theory that the police department should be upheld right or wrong, that the police department can do no wrong, that for a citizen to maintain his rights constitutes lese majeste, and must be severely punished; in other words to maintain "the dignity" of the law no matter at what cost, even of injustice.

The Observer believes strongly in maintaining and upholding the law. The Observer believes that even police officials should obey the law and should not violate it with impunity.

The autocratic theory which prevails here is not the American theory.

We are surprised that the people stand for it so patiently and so uncomplainingly. In every case that has come up, the City Commission has sustained the chief of police. They sustained him in the Karres case, in which he browbeat and forced a respectable restaurant keeper to refund money to a Chinese in a private dispute, without shadow of right or authority, in the course of which the chief of police assaulted, cursed and insulted the man's wife, who was in a delicate condition. The City Commission sustained the chief of police when he called a citizen a "pin-head" and a vagrant unjustly. The administration sustained him in the Kapellas case where he used his public office to force a local hotel keeper to refund money to a Chinese, another purely civil case, and one in which the chief of police had no right to interfere.

They sustained him in so many other cases that the people wonder.

Another case is at present on trial in which well-known and respectable citizens have been arrested, one clubbed and one threatened with death by the chief of police of La Grande.

The Observer maintains that the citizens of this community have rights which cannot be trampled upon by the police; that the police are public servants; that they are sworn to maintain law and order.

When policemen violate the law by assaulting our citizens, using foul and abusive language, and uttering threats to kill it is about time for a change.

The Municipal Court should realize that policemen who are lawless are a menace to the public; that their of-

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fenses should not be condoned. It should realize that the Municipal Court is not a collecting agency for revenue to bolster up city expenses which should be met by taxation.

The solution of the matter is simple. The City Commission should get a new chief of police, one who has no private quarrels or spites or enmities to punish, one who is peaceable instead of quarrelsome, lawabiding instead of lawless.

WRITE THE SOLDIER BOYS.

There are two things the soldier boy wants more than anything else in the world—a letter from home and a copy of his old home newspaper. The first brings him the love he craves, the other the news he longs for. Sunday, November 11 has been set aside as a day when everyone is asked to write a letter to a soldier boy and to send him a copy of the home paper.

The home tie is the strongest that the soldier knows. Keep it intact.

GETTING YOUR MONEY'S WORTH

"When you buy a book, try this test. Is it well made? Is it written in good English? Is it true to life? Does it increase your knowledge? Is it helpful in business? Is it wholesome? Does it lead to right living? Does it enrich your life? Do you love it as a friend? Are you proud to own it?" By courtesy of W. F. Yust, Rochester, N. Y.

And finally, when you buy a book, are you getting value received for your money?

In dozens of homes in this city are sets of commentaries, and "books" bought on the recommendation of some clever salesman. The books are unknown to any standard publisher.

It would probably be safe to offer a big reward for the discovery of a

person who has ever read them after buying.

The same might be said of the more reputable sets of "best books," "complete works" of standard authors, or scraps of universal knowledge put up in sets for children, "half-leather" \$20 extra.

How many are the authors whose complete works you care to read? In one of the sets of "best books" commonly sold how many of you have found congenial reading in the Bhagavad-Gita, "The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel," or Berkeley's "Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous in Opposition to Sceptics and Heretics?"

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