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WISDOM OF GAMALIEL.—Now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.—Acts 5:38, 39

## FORUM

### THE PARDON OF MURDERERS

To the Editor of the Observer:

To every student of affairs there have come many misgivings that something is vitally wrong with our laws and their enforcement. Within the last few years an orgy of crime and lack of uniform enforcement of law have run side by side throughout the state. Gambling, "bootlegging," obtaining money by false checks and immoralities seem to be almost immune so far as any effort to punish is concerned, and even murder itself is far more often let go unpunished than justice is meted out; with the few exceptions where the community becomes aroused, or personal propaganda against an unpopular individual becomes the controlling factor.

That the laws are wrong we cannot say. Our laws are based on, and derived from, the English common law; and in England there is speedy justice meted out to criminals, regardless of rank or influence, and crime is a minor misdemeanor. He who commits murder in England seldom escapes by some concocted perjured defense, or the exercise of the pardoning power; and it is a sad commentary that there are almost as many murders a year, in our cities as in the whole United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

The character and fiber of our people are the same as in England and Canada, and the laws being practically the same, there must be some other cause; and this cause is not difficult to determine. It is the way in which the laws are administered—the lack of uniformity, the indifference and connivance of officials with crime, and the abuse of the parole and pardoning power.

Among the many examples that can be pointed out, we have a glaring one in the pardoning and releasing of the Chinese murderers who were sent to the penitentiary for life about five years ago from Union county.

During the month of March, 1917, a young Chinaman by name of William Eng was brutally murdered by a gang of Chinese gunmen in front of the postoffice in La Grande, on Adams avenue, by being shot to death; and in the murder of this young man, the two Chinamen who did the shooting were absolutely indifferent as to the life of others. In the killing of Eng they were on the sidewalk of that street filled with people; and one of the shots struck and splintered the leg of Mrs. George, an employee in West's store, and another shot passed through the clothing of Iels Bryant, a high school girl, and would have killed her had it gone a few inches to one side of where it did. This was one of the most cold blooded brutal murders ever perpetrated. The actual gunmen were strangers to the victim, and imported to kill a man who had done them no wrong. It was a case that justified hanging if there was ever a case. Even the excuse that they were trying to break jail and would not kill unless necessary, as in the Till Taylor murder case, did not obtain. On account of capital punishment not at that time being in existence these men were sentenced to imprisonment for life—the two actual gunmen and the three who aided and abetted the crime.

The press reports the astounding news that Roy Ritner, while temporarily holding the governor's chair in the absence of Governor Olcott from the state for a few days, in the month of December last, proceeded to pardon or parole two of these murderers—Chin Borkey and Lem Ching. I do not know on whose recommendation he acted. Chin Borkey was one of the two who did the actual shooting and was imported here for that purpose, and the killing of Eng was shooting wildly down Adams avenue filled with people. The other one pardoned, Ching Lem, was on the street aiding and abetting the crime, and the evidence showed he was locating the victim a few days before.

Chin Borkey when he was taken to the penitentiary was made a "trusty," and his punishment made a farce of by being assigned as a cook to one of the penitentiary employees.

These pardons by a man, who for a few days filled the governor's office is a disgrace to the state, and a gross miscarriage of justice. It is almost inconceivable that we have such a system of laws that will allow a man elected to preside over the state senate in the way the presiding officer is elected—by scheming and logrolling and trading off appointments on committees, etc., and then in the absence of the governor, while filling that important

office for the purpose of carrying on the routine duties, to open the doors of the penitentiary, and turn loose upon the people a horde of criminals and murderers.

The man that is invested with the authority of the governor should be a broad minded intelligent man, capable of appreciating and understanding the responsibilities of such an office.

The acts of Mr. Ritner in this wholesale pardoning business is an object lesson to the public, and illustrates the importance of our state's having a lieutenant governor to fill the governor's office in his absence, death, removal or resignation. Then the people when selecting such an official would, also, consider that in addition to having a man preside over the senate, with the power to appoint committees and shape legislation, they would have gubernatorial timber capable of filling this office with intelligence and honor.

The present system of allowing the president of the senate, and after him the speaker of the house of representatives, to fill the governor's office in case a vacancy occurs, is the most important office in the state, in the contingency of a vacancy, and have turned the matter over to ward heelers and scheming politicians that would not for one instant be thought of as fit to fill such an office.

At this time I have not the names of the persons who recommended or influenced this temporary substitute to abuse a sacred trust, and commit such a wrong upon the people of the state, and especially upon the people of Union county; or whether such acts were his own doings alone. The present system of pardoning, both judicial and executive is bad enough, and abused enough, without such work as this. I might say, also, in this connection, that I understand the murderer, Waldo Perry, who killed his victim in cold blood, while he was entertaining the murderer and furnishing him food and a lodging near Union, was also, turned loose in this wholesale penitentiary delivery by Roy Ritner.

Respectfully submitted,  
J. S. HODGINS.

### THE OFFICE CAT

#### WINTER

The shoulders of the hills are bent.  
By heavy packs of drifted snow;  
The glaciers that the frost has sent,  
Have shivered mirror takes artow.

It is the time for winter sports,  
For skates and sleds and slender skis,  
For brave assaults of frozen forts  
And for the bathroom pipes to freeze.

"If Will Hays is sincere for his expressed intention to improve the morals," declares a La Grande man with emphasis, "he will issue a decree forbidding fat people from occupying and seats."

"Now they are sending handwriting by telegraph. That is deplorable. One beauty of a telegram is that it has always been neatly printed so you can read it."

Cy Kolney says if we knew how to enjoy what we've got the world wouldn't be such a bad place.

#### Or Grandfathers

"Now that the clapper and jazz are disappearing," rejoices Amos Tash, "we can resume the practice of blamming adenoids for everything."

Two girls in hiking costumes started the natives in an Indiana village. Their uniforms were too scarce to even bathe "along the Wabash." Now, the question is "what would they wear if they went in for other athletics, like running, for instance?"

You have noticed, perhaps, that every few of the professed women haters wear binders.

Mr. Bryan says he refuses to believe that his ancestry were "ignorant monkeys hanging by their tails from the family trees." Who said they were "ignorant?" They might have been educated in the "higher branches."

There is always enough trouble to furnish all the bad slams; observe the woman next door.

It calls for too much self-denial to diet on a certain La Grande girl who has a sweet tooth repeats some high powered stuff a la Dr. Cone, that "every day in every way, I'm getting thinner and thinner" as she consumes for lunch a thick beef sandwich in gravy, a huge piece of buttered potato and drinks hot chocolate with white

### More Sleep

If you feel a reluctance toward getting up when the alarm sounds these dark mornings and are inclined to turn over and take another hour's sleep, it may be due to not allowing yourself more sleep in winter than you are accustomed to take in other seasons of the year.

An English physician says it has been established scientifically that one needs more sleep in winter and an hour is about the right amount. The additional sleep represents the light lost by the change in the season. He mentions that animals deprived of light become drowsy. In a strong light sleep is less necessary. He suggests that the chemical rays of the sun exercise an effect on the body in causing vital substance to be stored which, in the absence of these rays, cannot be obtained except through the instrumentality of sleep.

Thus, if you do not want to get up, but think it's nicer to lie in your bed, it is not necessarily due to laziness. Nature may be calling for further restoration of wasted energies. That there is a scientific reason why one should sleep longer may be sufficient to still the feeling that one should get up and get to work. The retarded discovery of such a theory will cause regret, may be, if one has often tumbled out at the alarm heretofore when one should have taken another nap. Of course one should pursue methods which are conducive to health, especially if the treatment is so pleasant and easy of a cold, dark morning.

If in taking the extra hour one is late to the office or shop, the fact that one is operating under the advice of a physician might be sufficient excuse, unless the boss is not easily impressed by scientific reasoning. However, that is an individual matter. For those who can snooze an hour longer, the thought may be comforting that it is really what they ought to do.

### Honoring Izaak

The response to the suggestion that the birthplace of Izaak Walton be purchased for a shrine by the piscators of the world, met with a wholehearted response that surprised even the men behind the project. It will be done, and once more will humanity have done itself a good deed.

"The 'Compleat Angler'" always has stood, in three centuries, as the classic on fishing. Those quite conversant with the art say that now some of Walton's methods are antiquated, and the uninitiated reader who comes across the passage about impaling a live frog enjoys a little shiver.

But the heart of Walton was great and so was his book and thousands who could no easier cast for a trout than they could harpoon a salmon have taken their delight in it. Men honor themselves always when they pay tribute to a remarkable figure of the past for many as may be the claims of greatness on their attention, never will there be too many of the truly great from whose lives and works to draw both example and precept.

A man may boast about not wearing any man's collar, but if he is wise he will wear the neckties his wife bought him for Christmas.

Chief Justice of the Ohio supreme court says the United States is a law-ridden nation. But why worry? Not many are obeyed.

There is one thing to be said in favor of publicity seekers—if they cannot get their stuff on the front page they take what they can get.

Mark tumbled on news of the French invasion of Germany. That is some feat, considering where the mark has been.

The real test of credit comes when a man tries to open a charge account with a bootlegger.

The Montana man who bought a newspaper to keep his family busy was a good shopper.

A judge says better jurors are needed. But, if that is impossible, uglier murderesses would be a big help.

The powers would have more tender relations if they had more legal tender relations.

Lenine is not willing to be doctored communistically. When he is ill bourgeois physicians are all right.

When a man picks up a money-making idea the folks who overlooked it are likely to consider him lucky.

Reports about the delights of Venice must be exaggerated. That town is said to have 60,000 cats.

The person who is growing better might prove it by groaning less.

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We Solicit Your Account

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SOUND — RELIABLE — PROGRESSIVE

ped cream swimming around on top.  
Henry Ford says the way to get rich is to sell things cheap, but a farmer points out that the farmers tried that a long time before Ford ever did, and they aren't rich yet.

Broke His Crystal  
We learn from a headline that a careless hunter shot a Hutchinson, Kansas pastor "in the windshield" at the latter was driving in the country the other day.

Almost any man will assure you that the money he gets does not represent all he earns.

Whoever said there is no such thing as a little garlic, said a mouthful.

NOT OVERFLOWING  
"How's collections at your church, Brother Jackson?"  
"Well, we ain't nebbber had to stop in de middle of a collection to go an' empty de box."

Most schemes for saving the taxpayer's money seem to originate in \$2,000,000 public buildings.

Rawleigh spread his coat for a lady to step on. The modern holds his seat in the car and spreads his feet for a lady to step on.

It is nice to have a cop for a friend if he doesn't hook his arm in yours as you walk down the street together.

## DODGE BROTHERS

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