

# The Sentinel

A Weekly Newspaper With Plenty of Backbone

Elbert Bede and Elbert Smith Publishers  
Elbert Bede, Editor

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FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 1920.

## IS OPAL WHITELEY HERSELF OR SOMEONE ELSE?

(Concluded from first page.)

Cottage Grove, the nature of the little Opal was changed, that the nature which was that of her parents left the body and flew to a spiritual world in the great unknown and that another nature took possession of the deserted tenement of clay, that the new Opal not remembering the parents of the other Opal, thought that a substitution of body as well as of spirit had taken place and that the parents, having had charge of the body and not the spirit and the nature, did not know of this substitution which did not change the form or features or family resemblance.

Those who believe that the spirits of the dead are about us, might easily work out such a theory, for the Opal which we have known, while aggravatingly naughty, as her diary relates, yet seemed to be from the world apart, a being of another world. She seemed often even herself to forget her own bodily presence here when in day dreams she would fall from trees and other high places.

Many who have always known the Whiteleys scout the idea that is set down in Opal's diary. The parent and other relatives, apparently sore at heart, characterize it as the vagaries of a mind that has been abnormally developed along unusual lines. A few believe Opal's story and nearly all believe that Opal herself is sincere in its telling.

The Sentinel has not the space to at this time go further into detail as to this and other portions of the diary, but a review of the same is published herewith together with portions of the diary itself. It is a most remarkable piece of literature—one of the most remarkable the world has ever known—and is a fulfillment of the prediction of her many loving friends that Opal would attain a high goal if she did not wreck her health with overwork, which she frequently has come near doing.

### THE STORY OF OPAL

(By Elbert Smith)

Opal Whiteley has arrived. And, with her usual rare discrimination, she has selected America's most exclusive magazine—the Atlantic—in which to accomplish her arrival, the vehicle being a series of articles entitled "The Story of Opal," the first of which nestles snugly in the place of honor in the current number. And upon the Atlantic's classic cover her name, like Abou Ben Adham's, lends all the rest.

"The Story of Opal" purports to be the diary of Opal Whiteley. From some time in her sixth year to the present, according to an introductory note by the editor, it has continued without serious interruption.

It is inevitable that the authenticity of the purported writings of children—especially of six-year-old children—should be doubted, and Opal and her friends may as well prepare, with such equanimity as they possess, to weather the storm of controversy which "The Story of Opal" will precipitate.

It is true that orthography and punctuation have been conventionalized, to make the text more readable for folk without sufficient mental agility to adapt themselves readily to originalities in those respects; but that may be considered a concession to the average reader rather than a discredit to the original manuscript. No other ed-

iting has been done, the editor of the Atlantic declares, except that portions have been omitted here and there owing to the length of the manuscript which comprised some 150,000 words.

Here are a few paragraphs:  
"All the way from the other logging camp in the beautiful mountains we came in a wagon. Two horses were in front of us. They walked in front of us all the way. When first we were come, we did live with some other people in the ranch-house that wasn't all builded yet. After that we lived in a tent, and often when it did rain many raindrops came right through the tent. They did fall in patters on the stove and on the floor and on the table. Too, they did make the quilts on the beds some damp—but that didn't matter much because they soon got dried hanging around the stove. By and by we were come from the tent to this lumber shanty. It has got a divide in it. One room we do have sleeps in. In the other room we do have breakfast and supper. Back of the house are some nice wood-rats. The most lovely of them all is Thomas Chatterton Jupiter Zeus. By the woodshed is a brook. It goes singing on. It's joy does sing in my heart."

"Between the ranch-house and the house we live in is the singing creek where the willows grow. We have conversations. And there I do dabble my toes beside the willows. I feel the feels of gladness they do feel. And often it is I go from the willows to the meeting of the road. That is just in front of the ranch-house. There the road does have divides. It goes three ways. One way the road does go to the house of Sadie McKinzie. It does n't stop when it gets to her house, but mostly I do."

"I went to talk things over with my chum, Michael Angelo Sanzio Raphael. He is that most tall fir tree that grows just back of the barn. I scouted up the barn door. From there I climbed on to the lower part of the barn roof. I walked up a ways. Up there I take a long look at the world about. One gets such a good wide view of the world from a barn roof. After I looked looks in four straight ways and four corner ways. I said a little prayer. I always say a little prayer before I jump off the barn into the arms of Michael Angelo Sanzio Raphael, because that jump is quite a long jump, and if I did not land in the arms of Michael Angelo Sanzio Raphael, I might get my leg or neck broken. That would mean that I would have to keep still a long time. Now I think that would be the most awful thing that could happen, for I do so love to be active. So I always say a little prayer and do that jump in a careful way. Today when I did jump, I did land right proper in that fir tree. It is such a comfort to nestle up to Michael Angelo Sanzio Raphael when one is in trouble. He is such a grand tree. He has an understanding soul."

Quite a bit of territory for an ordinary six-year-old child; but Opal was not, of course, an ordinary six-year-old child.

Here is another paragraph:  
"When I was coming back from feeding them (baby yellowjackets) I heard a loud noise. That Rob Ryder was out there by the chute shouting at God in a very quick way. He was begging God to dam that chute right there in our back yard. Why, if God answered his prayer, we would be in an awful fix. The house we live in would be under water, if God dammed that chute."

It would seem that the educational curriculum of a logging camp takes in a bit of territory too. And a six-year-old child may be pardoned for misinterpreting things in the advanced courses.

Here is another:  
"Then I saw a man and woman coming across the field. The man was carrying a baby. Soon I met them. It was Larry and Jean and their little baby. They let me pat the baby's hand and smooth back its hair, for I do so love babies. When I grow up I want twins and eight other children, and I want to write outdoor books for children everywhere. Tonight, after Larry and Jean started on, I turned again to wave good-bye. I remembered the first time I saw Larry and Jean, and the bit of poetry he said to her. They were standing by an old stump in the lane where the leaves whispered, Jean was crying. He patted her on the shoulder and said:  
'There, little girl, don't cry, I'll come back and marry you by-and-by.'

In her own introductory note, however, she has woven for her story a trago-romantic background out of which she materializes a fictitious paragraph to whose early training she ascribes the influence which directed her subsequent precocious development. We may speculate with interest upon the effect which this revelation, whether fact or fiction, will have upon her book. While it doubtless will afford readers of her journal an opportunity for cogitation upon a more or less hackneyed theme, it will add no artistic value to the work, and those who love Opal's friends—the trees, flowers, birds, plants and subordinate fauna—will, we think, agree that the spirit of childhood which sings in every line of "The Story of Opal," would have sealed the heights of literary distinction on their own power.

A small opening often leads to large opportunities.

More men fall from being light headed than because they can't balance what they have in their upper stories.

A woman with electricity in her hair should turn the switch.

The man who never brags about his pugilistic abilities wins the majority of fights.

Sudden popularity ruins fully as many men as sudden prosperity.

A truthful man sometimes has to tell a lie to attract attention.

We have never yet seen a man so loyal to party that he would refuse votes from the other side.

And he did. And the angels looking down from heaven saw their happiness and brought a baby real soon, which was very nice, for a baby is such a comfort and twins are a multiplication table of blessings.

A desire for "twins and eight more children" must certainly be credited to a child not more than six years old, but we must admit (without doubting its authenticity) that the rest of the paragraph seems a bit heavy for the average run of grown-ups.

"The Story of Opal" is prefaced by two biographical introductions, one by the editor of the Atlantic and one by Opal; but to the people of Cottage Grove, who have known her from infancy, Opal needs no introduction.

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# To The Public:

On Monday, March 1, the railroad lines of the Southern Pacific Company were returned to their owners for operation. As a war measure they have been in charge of the government during the last two years and two months. The stockholders in that period had nothing to do with the management.

In taking over the management of this property, the policy of the owners will be to give as satisfactory service as lies in their power in return for the patronage given us; to seek the co-operation of shippers and passengers and of the whole people in having our service reasonably responsive to the public needs.

We have to ask the patient forbearance of the public during the readjustment period of the next six months. It is true during these six months the government continues the standard return allowed the lines while under its control, based on the pre-war earnings. But this return is subject to certain legislative directions by congress that will affect operations during this period, which ends August 31 next. We expect, however, within this six months to mature plans for the future. These plans had to be held in abeyance thus far because of uncertainty as to the legislative conditions to accompany the return of the roads to their owners for operation, and these conditions have been determined by congress only within the last few days. We now have to study what is before us in law and in fact and get our bearings anew.

The operating organization as it existed under Southern Pacific management has been to some extent disarranged during the period of federal control and operating practices have been changed, but the benefit of any new practices that may have proved efficient in the public service during the government control period, will, of course, be retained.

We could not purchase equipment after we entered the war because the government took control and war financing occupied the field, while during the rest of the time the question of adequate credit had to wait for answer in congressional action. On the other hand, the locomotives and cars in service have been subjected to the most active use and new rolling stock has not been renewed throughout the country in normal numbers for the increase of normal traffic. The burden of extraordinary war movements fell heavily upon all kinds of rolling stock, making it impossible to shop the equipment at the proper time, and repair work was further delayed by shortage during the larger part of the war period in both men and material.

The problem before us at once, therefore, is how to put to the best use the passenger train cars and the freight cars that are in service, and how to put into

good condition for service every piece of equipment to be had. This problem is before every railroad. Abreast of this is the larger question whether the earnings under the new law, the "Transportation Act of 1920," will be enough to establish the credit of the railroads at a point where they can provide themselves with the facilities of all kinds that they need to give the public proper service. We have the will if only we can find the ways and means. These are not easy to find, for an assumed earning of even 6 per cent, and no assurance of that, is not attractive to anyone having money to invest when money is worth 7 or 8 per cent in the open market.

Hence, the effect of the new act of congress upon earnings and upon the credit of the railroads cannot be immediately determined. This act provides for a rate-making structure, under which, during the next two years the railroads will be permitted to earn up to 5½ per cent annually on the value of the railroads as may be determined by the Interstate Commerce Commission. The Commission has power at its discretion to increase these possible earnings to 6 per cent, the added one-half of one per cent to be used only for improvements to the property.

No guarantee of any kind is given to any railroad, but half of any earnings over 6 per cent are to be taken by the government to make loans to railroads that may need them for improvements or to care for obligations falling due, or to obtain and lease equipment to the carriers that cannot afford to buy it.

Obviously these elements in the situation will have to be considered in making our plans. The Interstate Commerce Commission is the deciding body with respect to value of the properties, as well as the rates which are to yield the 5½ per cent return thereon, and much will depend upon the vision and promptness of action with which that body accepts its great responsibilities.

In the meantime it is particularly desirable, in view of the shortage of equipment, that every effort be made by shippers and the railway forces to continue heavy car loading and train loading, and to lose no time in loading and unloading cars.

Believing that we will have the full co-operation of the people served by our lines in dealing with the problems presented, it is due them that in thus aiding us they should know what problems we have to meet. You can rest assured we are not idle with respect to them.

## WM. SPROULE, President

### THINGS WE THINK

Things Others Think and What We Think of the Things Others Think

The moral yard-stick your neighbor uses on you is usually a short one—about the same length as the one you use on him.

It beats all how surprised a girl can appear when the question is popped—after she has been preparing for it for six months.

The man who deserts the family he has helped to create is so small by nature that a mosquito couldn't find a landing place.

A man's holiday is just what his wife has been waiting for. She has saved up about a week's work in anticipation of the occasion.

Prosperity seems to cause more discontent than hard times—the more there is to get the more folks imagine they aren't getting their share.

Widows and widowers are not as selfish and avaricious as other people. Many of them devote much time and attention to looking out for No. 2.

When a man gets so seriously in love that he declares himself ready to lay down his life for his sweetheart, it is really cruel of her to facetiously ask: "On the dead?"

The Oregon Agricultural college teaches poultrying with moving pictures. A picture of the hen getting a move on would be something like it.

If only the good were to teach higher morals this old world would be in a bad way.

Pencils are being made from potatoes and men's collars from milk. If some friend of humanity would only discover a method whereby the squeal of the croaker could be transformed into an article of diet and the wasted energy of the knocker harnessed and used for motive power, we would feel that the millennium was close at hand.

A man who is married may not be able to do anything he wishes—but neither does he do anything just as his wife wishes.

## "I'll Tell the World" says the Good Judge

The man who doesn't chew this class of tobacco is not getting real satisfaction out of his chewing.

A small chew. It holds its rich taste. You don't have to take so many fresh chews. Any man who uses the Real Tobacco Chew will tell you that.

Put Up In Two Styles

RIGHT CUT is a short-cut tobacco  
W-B CUT is a long fine-cut tobacco



## Many Useful Small Wares



we sell, such as coat hangers, furniture rollers, door knobs, book screws, drawer handles, etc. Every home, office or factory has need of hangers, towel racks, door checks, window ventilators and similar useful articles. A stroll through our large stock will suggest ideas to you.

## W. L. DARBY & CO.

## Shave Yourself

REXALL SHAVING CREAM, 30c

Gives a rich, soft, creamy lather, does not irritate the skin and does not break down the beard. It is clean and economical to use.

REXALL SHAVING LOTION, 50c, 85c

Is a quick-drying antiseptic lotion that prevents after shaving irritation.

REXALL VIOLET TALCUM, 30c

Is the perfect finish of a perfect shave. We also have Strops, Lather Brushes (the non-shed kind), Safety Razors (all kinds), Safety Razor Blades, Sumate Guaranteed Razors, a complete assortment.

## The Modern Pharmacy

Cottage Grove Oregon

The Rexall Store