

Mt. Scott Herald

Published Every Friday at Lents Station, Portland, Oregon.

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Entered as second-class mail matter February 14, 1914, at the post-office at Lents, Oregon, under act of Congress, March 3, 1879.

Subscription Price \$1.50 a year

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KEEP YOUR DOLLARS AT HOME

The person who makes his living in a community, receiving its money for his labor or its products, and then squanders the habit of spending his money elsewhere, is assisting, knowingly or unknowingly, to exhaust the resources of that community just the same as the man who wastes his energy in dissipation.

The laws of nature cannot be violated with impunity. If one takes out of life more than he puts in; if he tears down his physical strength faster than he can rebuild, he must eventually pay the price.

What is true of the laws of nature is naturally true of economic laws. The people of a community may for a time continue to tear down faster than they build it up without any apparent disaster, but it cannot be continued indefinitely.

One man may do this for a time without visible effect, but when a score or more continue this practice the result is noticeable, and when a hundred or one thousand do it, there is an inevitable collapse. Those who are responsible for this situation may think they have done a cunning thing, and may profit for a time individually, but in time to come they will suffer for their indiscretion.

CRIMINAL LIABILITY

For the past few weeks, the public, and especially that branch directly interested, has been all stirred up by the throwing of the affairs of the firm of Morris & Co. into the hands of a receiver. Hundreds of columns of white space have been utilized in telling the public of the iniquity of those who were instrumental in causing the firm's insolvency.

It is natural for one who has invested his hard earned money to become wrought up when he leaves a scalawag in charge of his money, or otherwise defrauded him. And those of us not directly injured are also interested, for we never know when the lightning will strike us, and we are apprehensive. So, when one of this class of frenzied financiers is brought to the bar of justice, there occurs a loud demand for punishment.

Very good. Let the guilty suffer. But in the meantime let us not forget that under our American theory of criminal law the presumption of innocence lies until the contrary is proven. Let us further remember that no matter how morally reprehensible one's actions may be, unless he directly violates a statutory provision, he can be punished only by the weight of public opinion.

At this writing it is not possible to definitely know to what extent a shortage of funds exists. Until the final report of the receiver is made, and until several court actions now pending are adjudicated, nothing definite can be said. It may happen, although it does not so appear now, that the creditors will receive dollar for dollar, and that no one will suffer loss. And until the case is tried by some other medium than the press, the criminal liability, if any exists, of Etheridge or Morris or others, will not be conclusively proven.

There are, however, several facts of interest to the public which in the general excitement have perhaps been overlooked.

While the so-called blue sky law gives the state corporation commission no authority to interfere in the affairs of state or municipal corporations or banks and banking institutions, no such prohibition exists when a corporation did what Morris & Co. did—issue interim certificates, scraps of paper, not stock; merely contracts between the investor and Morris & Co. to deliver stock at some time in the future. If Morris & Co. were not occupying a position of trust what were they doing, and what was the corporation commission doing in the meantime? Were they awake to the fact that people were exchanging good cash for doubtful paper? And if they were not, what is a blue sky law and a corporation commission for, anyway?

Under the laws of Oregon, the directors of a corporation are charged with constructive knowledge of its affairs, that is, they are presumed to have, by virtue of their official office, cognizance of the condition of the firm's financial status. If money was accepted when the corporation was insolvent, they are legally supposed to have known that fact.

Furthermore, any person holding (not necessarily owning) stock in an Oregon corporation, is liable for its debts to the amount of his holding. If Fred Morris, or any other individual, held stock in the insolvent firm, and property in the name of the holder liable to execution can be found, it can be attached, attorneys declare.

The receiver of an insolvent corporation is appointed to ascertain and report to the court its conditions, receipt and disbursements, and owing to it, and generally protect the interests of the creditors. He has no power to pay out money to the latter. This is the function of the referee, a permanent fixture. Each draws, as compensation, one per cent of the assets, a tidy sum in the present case.

It may be said in passing, without violating the spirit of fairness supposed to permeate American jurisprudence and which frowns upon a discussion of a case so as to influence prospective jurors, that in the opinion of competent and unprejudiced attorneys, the state's case

against Etheridge upon the counts of larceny and embezzlement, is not too strong, and a conviction is not certain. Later developments may change this aspect, however. There is quite a general feeling that Etheridge, no matter what his past record may have been, may not prove to have been altogether responsible for the insolvency of Morris & Co. It is said that a few years ago the business of the firm was neither large nor profitable, and it is believed that Etheridge may have assumed control of an insolvent institution. While his business methods may have been lax and while the expenses of conducting the affairs of the firm may have been unwarrantably heavy, there is doubt in the minds of the informed that he hypothecated any of the assets in a manner which will render him criminally liable.

The foregoing was written before Mr. Etheridge made his public statement to the press this week.

The merchants of every community are the backbone of that community, so far as its progressiveness and prosperity are concerned. Individually, there are always some slackers who do not exert themselves to boost for the community; simply are living parasites. But the live-up-to-date merchant of this day and generation give every one the glad hand; tries to treat you right; wishes to live and let live; sells at a fair profit and endeavors to observe the golden rule. You will invariably find their advertisement of business conducted in their home paper. They desire your patronage and desire that you should know it.

There are residents of this mundane sphere who apparently seem able to get through this world without very much effort; some who live on the theory that the world owes them a living; they take all they can get and leave nothing in return. Said to say, in the writer's brief experience in this community, he has found a few of this specie of scurvy creatures, but they are the exception to the rule and a minor factor.

The alarm of fire one day last week in Lents which proved to have been the evil work of boys and overlooked with indifference by many, may some day be repeated and treated in the same manner, only to prove a sad joke to many residents and owners of property. With the little fire protection observable to the naked eye in this community, we sometimes wonder at the carelessness exhibited by some of the residents of this section.

Every dollar spent in this community the more assists to make it the more liveable.

Last Saturday evening, January 8, one of the Portland city dailies printed nearly half a column of "Lents News" that had appeared in the Mt. Scott Herald Friday, December 31, just eight days previous. "Better late than ever, applies in this particular case, and would seem to be an amusing quotation.

Some city people seem to think that because a farmer works in an open field he has no overhead expense.

Africa has been hard hit by the high cost of living, where the price of wheat has increased 100 per cent.

Those fellows can shoot all the rockets at the moon that they want to, but they'll find that it is no easy mark.

With potatoes a dollar a bite one can imagine something better than pansies to grow in this year's window boxes.

The move to wear overalls as a protest against clothing profiteers is hampered by the increase in price of overalls.

Amundsen, ice-bound, has quit his quest for the North Pole. And, probably, they're fashions for gum drops up there.

If wars, earthquakes and panics gave as much advance notice as a presidential campaign, they wouldn't happen at all.

Even when the old clothes wear out there are still the unused dress suits which determined men may wear to their offices.

Some of the sure-enough working-men appear to believe that a suit of overalls has dignity which should not be trifled with.

Another objection to that revolution in Mexico is that it distracts people's minds from the more serious business of bull fighting.

Much will depend on the aviator whether the development of the airplane makes it a part of the sack to the land movement.

The prediction that gasoline will be 50 cents a gallon by fall calls for a revision of the cost of getting out the long-haul vote.

Sending one's voice by wireless and having it recorded is additional proof that a man never goes so far but that his voice follows him.

There are 11,000,000 farms in the United States. Now what more is needed are a few more husky American boys down on them.

"Are sermons indispensable?" Is a church issue in London where an effort seems to be under way to arrive at the long and short of it.

Time is no better off now than the rest of the world. The inhabitants are experiencing the pinch of food shortages and profiteering prices.

REDUCING SURPLUS.

That nobody loves a fat man is a saying approved of tradition. Therefore, when recently, as the result of an exhaustive survey, it was scientifically determined that every ninth man in Chicago is far too fat for comfort and health, presumption was that there would speedily be organized a fat man's reduction club in the Windy city. But instead we have the experiment of a 90 days' dieting and exercise reduction test for Chicago women. The explanation is that there are really more heavyweight women than men in Chicago, but gallantry forbade making that a feature of the survey, says Cincinnati Commercial Tribune. Among the peculiarities of human habit, custom, practice or what not, all functions have their foundations in food. If we receive we eat. If we entertain visiting delegations we feed them. Likewise distinguished dignitaries and all sorts and conditions of conventions and conferences. We eat and get fat; then we eat to get lean. Instance—the Fat Women's Reduction club of Chicago is depending principally on dieting for taking off the surplus which was accumulated by too much diet. But the process is interesting and the outcome a matter of anxious observation by the fair of all the country. What with the beer supply shut off and the free lunch made obsolete, the fat men should be able to simulate feminine sacrifice.

The period of talk will doubtless be succeeded by quiet action. Words do very well for programs, and for the frames of action, but fulfillment comes in deeds. We have always been more or less a wordy people. We have indulged as a people, a penchant for orators. But we have discovered that it is mostly the silent men, who do things, says Dearborn Independent. The old story about using so much steam in the whistle that there is none left for the wheels, is more than humor—it is philosophy. It is mighty easy to re-create the world in a speech or reorganize society on paper. Men who actually put into practical operation the new thing, who prove its worth and get it established, may not go down in the list of world-producers, but they are the real statesmen.

The contention of Ko-Ko in "The Mikado" that when a man is officially pronounced dead, he is dead to all intents and purposes, has been solemnly confirmed by the action of the war authorities in notifying a Massachusetts lieutenant, in spite of his repeated denials of the report of his death, that his body is now on the way home. Whether he could be court-martialed for insubordination in persisting in being alive, remarks Baltimore American, is now a question.

An enlisted man in the navy received second honors in a prize contest for the best essay on "Leadership" in a contest open to all from commander down to "gob." This recognition of right and merit, irrespective of rank, is one reason why the American army and navy are better than the best on the other side, where certain honors are shut out from the grasp of a man, however capable of earning them, because of his position in the social scale.

Men are unwise who retire from active affairs to take their ease. Ease is frequently but a short cut to the grave. One who is calloused to harness and by interest in his task persuaded to forget the advancing years finds when he quits the strife that strength has gone from him. The strain which he endured and enjoyed comes to settle an accumulated score.

The United States dollar doubled in value in Greece following the overthrow of Venizelos. As the future plans of that leader seem to be somewhat in doubt, maybe we could get him to come over here and be overthrown again.

A more or less eminent pugilist advises aspiring boxers not to let anybody hit them if they can help it and a good many boxers seem to achieve this result by doing all their fighting with a typewriter.

The League of Nations has been presented with a bill of over \$15,000 for cigars smoked or carried off at the Spa conference. At this rate, the pipe of peace is going to be somewhat expensive.

Thomas Edison has been given a distinguished service medal by the Navy department, but he never will get one from the fellow in the flat across the hall for getting up the phonograph.

Jazz is reported to be fifty years old. The late Doctor Osler would have had a great many with him if he had suggested that it should have been chloroformed when it was forty.

To those adventurers who are remembered in special prayers because they go down to the sea in ships must now be added those who dare the trackless upper spaces in airplanes.

DOCTRINE AND CONDUCT.

In these days when there is so much dispute about doctrine, creed, opinion, faith, etc., it is strange that people don't go to the Bible (St. John, 7:17) and read: "If any man do his will he shall know of the doctrine." That is the only way to discover the doctrine. You cannot communicate it; you cannot argue it into a man, you cannot furnish him a faith by word. It is the life that tells. We don't care how smart a man is or how eloquent, the only way he can teach a doctrine is by his conduct. That speaks louder than words. How much time is wasted trying to convince men you are right and they are wrong. It cannot be done that way. But if you argue with fine deeds and a generous life you can make them look your way. Harsh words, petulant attacks, violent language harden men rather than win them, says Ohio State Journal. A man should be turned out of church who runs down a man by calling him names. It is positively wicked. It shows the weakness of a cause when there is a resort to personal detraction.

A French author once coined the phrase, "The land of the mind." It is a realm that many of us have forgotten. There the imaginary is real; there death is unknown, and the only riches are men's thoughts. With every age it grows with splendor. Dickens, Milton, Shakespeare, Hugo—these and countless others have left their all for those who travel there. The demands of existence have blinded some of us to the joys that lie in such travels. As children we roamed the fields of imagination, but now we believe only in the material. Yet we call ourselves wise. The dreary nights of winter are ahead, says London Express. Why not cheat them of their dreariness, and on the wings of literature journey to the Land of the Mind?

A good many towns and hamlets in the French war area have been "adopted" by different communities among the allies. Now comes the news that South Africa has bought French terrain outright. General Smuts' government actually holds the title deeds to Dilville Wood, which has a touch of sacredness to the South Africans. If things go on like this, who knows but what, in a century or two, another Joan of Arc may arise to put the foreigners out of France and win back the precious soil of France for the French!

Figures on farm profits covering seven years in two areas and five years in a third were recently given out by the United States Department of Agriculture. These figures show: That very few farmers in the groups studied have made large profits in recent years. Most of the farmers were making less than \$500 cash per year over and above the things the farm furnishes. Five hundred dollars will not go very far at this time.

The new Alaskan government railway, 552 miles long, from the port of Seward to Fairbanks in the central part of the territory, is sure to play an important part in the growth of the country. Already 440 miles of the road has been completed, and the rich coal field of Matanuska has been opened. Our naval fleet in the Pacific will get its coal supply from that source in the future.

An expert in the theatrical world declares that home brews are ruining the national digestion to such an extent as to spoil the good humor of theater audiences. Thus prohibition is inferentially charged with turning the country into one big, substantial grouch.

Immigrants from Red centers in Europe are said to be coming into this country at the rate of 10,000 a day. Yet there is more talk of a "yellow peril," although there are fewer than 200,000 of the yellow races in the entire country.

A "marrying pastor" who has officiated at 3,000 weddings, has taken a bride himself, now, at the age of eighty. At that, his powers of resistance were retained for a goodly number of years.

Princess Mary of England is said to have written to a friend: "Mother is trimming a hat for me. You can imagine what it looks like!" Uneasy lops the head that wears a home-trimmed hat.

Archduke Ferdinand of Austria announces that his services as a butler are available at \$5 a day. But can an archduke assume a haughty enough expression to look like a butler?

Treasury officials say that Uncle Sam must have four billions a year. Which, after all, means only \$4 apiece from all of us, even if we had to pay it all ourselves.

Spain now has a bull fighters' union. It is a pity the bulls cannot form one also.

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