

# OREGON CITY ENTERPRISE.

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are two main attractions for a rich dwelling, as well as for a modest, cozy little room. We have just received a large, well assorted shipment of lace curtains, prices ranging between 50c and \$5.50 a pair. Our new style rugs are especially well suited for holiday presents. These are mostly American made rugs, and the best that can be made for little money. Do not fail to inspect our display of transparent imported chinaware.

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## GREAT LANDLORDS.

ASTOR PROPERTY IN NEW YORK WORTH NEARLY \$200,000,000.

There is No Sentiment in the Management of This Vast Property—Tenants Must Face the Music—Not Very Progressive and Wait For Others to Lead.

We are all inclined to regard the great American landlord with disfavor. He is associated in our minds with the idea of high rents, demanded the instant they are due, with unfulfilled promises as to repairs and little improvements that would add so much to our comfort and with many other small annoyances that make him the man terrible, the man unfaithful, the man hostile.

Through the obscurity of these prejudices it is doubtful if many of us see him clearly or judge him fairly. According as we are near moving day or not and as we secure repairs we are apt to regard him as a very disagreeable person, indeed, with few of the higher human attributes or else the reverse, and in the meantime we pay rent and tolerate him because he continues to exist and the law protects him.

Perhaps the best example of the American landlord is Astor, or rather the Astors. The interests of this famous New York family are so numerous and so extensive, so widely distributed and so varied in character, that as landlords they hold sway over all classes of society, occupying every kind of structure. Then, too, the Astors are typical in that no sentiment enters into the management of their properties, and, after all, this is true of the management of most real estate in this city.

As landlords the Astors demand the market rate for rents, and they demand it the first of every month or quarter, as the case may be. Sooner than make material concessions in the amount to be paid on a lease the Astors will allow a house to remain vacant, not one season or year only, but two, three or more years, and if then a good tenant is not at hand the building will be altered, provided the condition of the neighborhood requires it. It is apparent, therefore, that the Astors get the figures they ask. These are not the highest paid, for the estates take no risks, but they are well up to the average.

No one possibly requires more assurance of responsibility in tenants than the Astors. References as to character and financial standing must be forthcoming if you would be an Astor tenant, and they must be more than paper references, for they will be investigated carefully. If you are unknown or cannot show who you are and what you have got, and that you are fairly certain of being able to meet the rent for the term of the lease, do not try to rent an Astor house. You will be refused.

As a matter of fact, the Astor rent rolls, if one could secure copies of them, would be an excellent commercial directory, far more reliable within the limited sphere, perhaps, than anything ever attempted in this city. Ninety-five per cent of the persons whose names are on them pay the rent they agreed to pay on the first of every month. Those on the rolls who do not disappear when their leases are up or before if possible. The Astors are not hard landlords, but they are very businesslike, and the dispossession proceeding is resorted to whenever occasion demands.

Though of Dutch stock the Astors have no feeling of friendliness for the liquor traffic. The saloon keeper is not wanted, even at the high rates he offers, and neither is any other sort of tenant who is likely to clash with the police. From time to time, of course, persons not in favor with the authorities creep into Astor properties, but when discovered they are ousted as quickly and as quietly as possible.

So far as improvements go, the estates are behind many of the other large landlords and a host of the smaller ones. Up to a very recent period the management of the family possessions was exceedingly unprogressive, and it is hardly up to what might be expected of it yet. It is urged in defense of this policy that various sections of the city in which Astor holdings are large are at present undergoing a change and that alterations appropriate in character will be made later. That is the trouble with the Astors. They are always backward in aiding a change. Their conservatism holds them in check, while smaller and weaker men take the risk, and often they stand in the way of progress by presenting immense blocks of property directly in the line of great improvements. If changes are effected all around them, they will alter also, but they are always the last to do so.

In the matter of individual repairs, decorations and the like they are not liberal, but they have the reputation of doing what they promise. Usually residences are put in order before the new tenant goes in, and then the occupant has got to be very careful. It is not expected by the estates that much money will be spent upon the house except at long intervals.

The Astors hold few tenements and flats directly, though they own the ground upon which hundreds of such structures stand. This kind of building is not popular with either branch of the family, and they only have to do with it so far as receiving leasehold rents are concerned. Dwellings in great number and comprising all kinds, from one bringing in hundreds yearly to one yielding thousands, and business and

office buildings and hotels are chiefly the income producers aside from the leasehold properties.

How much those rents amount to perhaps only the Astors can tell, but the real estate of the two branches of the family is worth nearly \$200,000,000, according to a conservative estimate, and most of it is rented. If it averaged 5 per cent, the yield would be \$9,000,000 to \$10,000,000 a year, to be divided between two men.—New York Herald.

## WAIL OF A FLAT DWELLER.

Mr. Werkenday's Remarks on New York Apartment Bathrooms.

"A long and bitter experience in apartments forces me to observe," said Mr. Werkenday, shivering as he hopped on the oilcloth of the bathroom with his bare feet, "that the architects who plan the ordinary flat of commerce do not bathe. I don't judge this from their appearance, because they are a particularly clean and nice lot of men. But I cannot believe that any one with the least respect for the importance of the bathroom could treat it with such architectural staidness."

"It always is shoved away in a dark corner as far from the bedrooms and as near the parlor or dining room as possible. It always is dark and ventilated by an airshaft up which there blows perpetually a dismal draft that has something on its mind and groans about it all the time. It ought to have something on its mind, for it is a sure killer. Then, of course, the bathroom, being the only place in the house where one takes off all his clothes and gets wet all over, is the place which most frequently has no heating appliances."

"Again, why do so many architects build the washstand in the hallway instead of in the bathroom, where it belongs? I don't know whether they think that a man enjoys taking his bath in sections or whether they act on the theory that he ought to take it gradually, preparing himself for the bathtub by degrees."

"I asked an architect once why he did it. 'Well,' said he, 'we hardly ever do differently except in private houses.' 'Has only the privateer, then, as the Europeans call him, the right to take a complete bath in one room, or has evolution produced a species of flatters who naturally are incapable of doing it?'"

"I suppose that the smallness of bathtubs is explained by the lack of room. Of course every flatstone bathtub is too small for any one except an infant, and I have noticed, not without some awe, that in each new flat into which we move the bathtub is smaller than it was in the one preceding. As I am growing stouter each year, a genuine misfortune for one whose finances make a third or fourth part necessary, I am sure that if we make two or three more 'moves' we will, on this scale of bathtub decrease, find a bathtub into which I will not be able to get at all."—New York Press.

## A TEST FOR HORSEFLESH.

But Even a Chemist Cannot Always Recognize It.

"People are apt to jump at conclusions," said a chemist in speaking of the latest notable murder case. "Chemistry is a very nice science, but it is possible to make some sad blunders in applying it to law and evidence. There are certain things you can prove by it if you are sure of your premises and certain other things that you cannot. This thing of trying to prove a good deal by chemistry calls to mind the beef extract case that gave a packer in this city considerable uneasiness."

"Somebody got hold of his beef extract and claimed that it was made from horseflesh, and it was proved by analysis—that is, to the satisfaction of the man that analyzed it. The ordinary test for horseflesh, according to the authorities, is glycogen. This is a substance that, speaking in a general way, is found in horseflesh, but does not exist in beef, and it was shown that this particular extract contained glycogen."

"The packer came to us in some distress of mind for a way out of the difficulty. He said his extract was made of nothing but beef, and he wanted us to help him prove it, and we did so to his relief and to the satisfaction of the health officers. We demonstrated that, while an ordinary piece of beef did not contain glycogen, it existed in the heart, liver and blood of cattle, and some of each of these might have entered into the making of the beef extract. The result was that the chemist who had arrived at first sweeping conclusions from the first test had to back down from his position."—Chicago Times-Herald.

## The New Ribbons.

The new ribbons are very attractive and are evidently going to be more than ever a feature of dress trimming. There are gorgeous plaids and the most fascinating array of stripes, up and down and across in the Roman fashion. Three or four shades of one color are striped together, with possibly a velvet stripe on one edge, and then again there are many stripes of contrasting colors blending together with a bright, pretty effect. Oriental brocaded ribbons add to the variety, and so do glace ribbons with fancy borders. There are velvet ribbons with the ribs running crosswise, some in lovely colors, the newest being a clear shade of purple blue.

## Illiterate Turkish Women.

Out of the large number of women in Constantinople—the population is nearly 1,000,000—not more than 5,000 can read or write.

## MORTALITY OF SLANG

WORDS AND PHRASES THAT RUN WILD AND ARE SHORT LIVED.

The Use of Slang as a Habit Compared to Swearing and the Intemperate Use of Intoxicants—The Harm That Results From the Nonsensical Custom.

The Italian method of prefixing a *s* to a word to give it a damaging significance can be employed with good effect in christening that wayward and degenerate offspring of English known as slang. In its present state language has attained to such a luxurious completeness that it warrants serious treatment. So copious and comprehensive has it become that there is hardly a human want, feeling or emotion of the heart that cannot be translated into the vernacular of the boothblack. In studying the philosophy of slang the first natural query is, How and why did it originate? To the first question one might give, with certain modifications, the same answer that would be given to the question, Why do people swear? The human animal, like a locomotive, seems to require escape valves for occasions when there is too much steam in the boiler. When a man is overflowing with admiration, anger or wonder, the ordinary adjectives do not (or he thinks they do not) meet the emergency. They do not relieve his pent up fullness any more than a sip from a dewdrop would quench a man's thirst. The natural man and the natural woman sometimes find relief under strong emotion in explosive utterances. In the case of anger the escape valve expressive is an oath unless the man in question happens to be a gentleman and sometimes, though very rarely, when he is.

It will thus be seen that slang, being of emotional ancestry, is a first cousin to the oath, and both are used by those who mentally resemble the man whose use of intoxicating drinks has made him forget or underestimate the attractions of pure water. Slang, in sooth, is a whisky distillation of language. It is so strong that it may be taken only very rarely with impunity, and herein lies the chief danger in its use. Not only does the slanguist find ordinary English tame, but he ends in not being able to find any English at all.

Another fatal characteristic of slang is the very one which at first secures its adoption—namely, its pungency. The same law that makes quiet colors and shades wear well in the world of fabrics has its counterpart in the world of speech. We tire very speedily of a startling costume, in high colors, and just as speedily do we tire of slang, which is startling, high colored speech.

Still another reason why slang can never gain a permanent foothold in the language is its utter lack of dignity. No subject can be seriously treated in slang. Its sole function is to tickle by its patness or its grotesqueness. It reflects a fugitive irrelevance upon current wit and humor, as like the bubble catches prismatic colors, but, like the bubble, it vanishes even while you behold it. Naturally there are slang phrases of all degrees of goodness and badness, ranging from the word which is only a slight remove from a forcible but perfectly decorous adjective to slang of the most daring, deep dyed order. At one end of the scale, for instance, one might place "fetching" and at the other end its superlative "rum." Again, the injunction "play ball" is gentle and seemly, in comparison with the brusque command "get a move on." Along certain lines the slanguist seems to revel in extravagant synonyms and antonyms, especially in those expressing some infirmity in the upper story. The man who has "wheels" is also popularly known as "nutty," "cracked" or "off his trolley." Again, if he comes from the country, he is "corn raised," has "seed in his hair," or his "face doesn't fit him." "Gall," "nerve," "cheek," "sand," "brass" and "face" are also nearly synonymous terms for qualities whose universality has made them a target for popular satire. Equally prolific is the slanguist in coining terms for money. "Dust," "tin," "sand," "rocks," "chink" and "spundulicks" are only a few of the words that translate "filthy lucre."

Two of the slang phrases now in gallingly frequent use are, "That's right," and "That won't cut much ice." The latter, it must be confessed, has certain cool figurative qualities which give it a saving color of grace. But most of these phrases rely chiefly upon their condensed expressiveness, which is the trademark of their American manufacture. They are but one of the many devices of the masses to compass a succinct and avoid circumlocutions. Thus "snap" and "cinch" are time economy for a moneyed sinner and an assured competence.

One of the surest tests of the rapid mortality of slang is the extremely painful sensation produced by hearing antiquated slang phrases used—and there are always people who are two or three or ten years behind in their use of such phrases. When other people are saying "Not on your taintie," the user of mildewed slang feebly ejaculates "I should smile." The piquancy and patness of certain phrases make it hard to declare that slang has no legitimate use. But concerning its misuse, there can hardly be two opinions among people whose opinions are worth anything. A careful study of the qualities of men and women who habitually interlard their remarks with slang will furnish anybody with a world of convincing conclusions in favor of pure English.—Critic.