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PORTLAND, THURSDAY, DEC. 21, 1911.

DEMOCRACY'S NOSE IN THE PORK BARREL.

The Democratic majority in the House has already given evidence that its appetite has more influence than its pledges, and the committees are preparing to pile up more evidence. Not the greed for appropriations and for the votes which they are expected to swing the Democrats have already forgotten the pledges of economy which they made only a year ago. Their raids on the Treasury, if successful, will swell the Government expenses in the next fiscal year to a sum larger than they ever reached in time of peace. If all the schemes already propounded go through and the Democrats develop a "growing appetite" as the session passes, they will cause a deficit of over $100,000,000 in the fiscal year 1913.

Already Democratic rapacity for votes has caused the passage in the House of the Sherwood pension bill, which would expend $75,000,000 in the effort to win the votes of the average of 2000 old soldiers and their dependents in each Congressional district. The committee on public buildings has just voted to report an omnibus building bill, which its chairman hopes to hold down to $20,000,000, but which is more likely to be expanded to $40,000,000 when it reaches the House. The Secretary of the Treasury recommends an appropriation of $23,000,000 for rivers and harbors, which sum the hungry Democrats will perhaps double with demands from every district which has a creek capable of floating a flatboat.

Democracy already has its nose in the pork barrel and is deaf to the appeals of Underwood not to disgust the country by its greed. That leader, moved by fear that his party will waste the first opportunity in sixteen years to win the Presidency, voted against the Sherwood pension bill and appealed to the buildings committee against the building grab. But the pension bill went through with a rush and the committee voted to report an omnibus building bill. Underwood's only hope now is to induce a Democratic caucus to forbid the introduction of the latter bill, but he admits that he will have the fight of his life.

Political motives largely animate the Democrats in their present course as in the passage of the tariff bills at the extra session. They fully expect President Taft to veto the Sherwood pension bill and the building bill. He warned the Republican leaders in the last Congress that he would veto any such measure which came to him in future. The Democrats calculate that, if the President should sign the pork-barrel bills, they will get the pork and he will share the odium. If he should veto the bills, they expect to save their record for economy on the face of the returns and to save the votes of their greedy constituents also, while the President will alienate the soldier vote and the vote of the small towns which are most eager for public buildings.

That the President will not hesitate to veto the bills, regardless of the consequences to his own political fortunes there can be small doubt. He has already intimated, though not in specific words, that he would rather be right than win a second term. He has shown by previous vetoes that he places the performance of his duty above the gratification of his ambition and that he has the courage to act upon his convictions. The probabilities are that, by vetoing the pork-barrel bills, he will win the approval of far more than enough people to offset those whose greed for pensions and buildings he will have disappointed.

THE GOVERNOR AND HIS CRITICS.

The Oregonian is said to be "hounding West." The accusation comes from a bushwhacking partisan of the Governor, a newspaper that has made a practice of pursuing relentlessly and with vindictive hatred public men like Senator Fulton and Acting-Governor Bowerman and other Republicans for the heinous offense of belonging to the "old guard."

Governor West is a soft-hearted, well-intentioned young man who has happened through exceptional conditions to be elevated to the Governor's chair. He has got into trouble through his egregious meddling with stable methods of government and boyish experimentation with the powers and privileges of his high office. He takes a snapshot judgment of every question or problem that comes before him and formulates over night grave state policies. He has an entirely original genius for getting in hot water by saying foolish things and doing other things equally absurd. He vetoes legislative bills wholesale, most of them worthy, because it suits his whim or because their authors are his enemies, takes a great group of grinning convicts under his wing, stages a murderer's reprieve at the state prison in the most theatrical fashion, abolishes the death sentence, and otherwise disports himself in a manner to surprise and startle the public. The Governor is subjected to a constant fire of criticism because he provokes criticism by his spectacular progress from one freakish and juvenile executive performance to another. That is all.

Let Governor West, who aspires to "emulate" the example of Abraham Lincoln, as he says, be reminded that the Great Emancipator freed slaves, not convicts. He never acted in haste, spoke unjustly or in anger, bore malice, punished personal enemies, broke faith with friend or foe, spurned counsel, despised precept, contemned experience, set aside the law, usurped the function of the Legislature, or evaded responsibility for his own deliberate acts.

COMMISSIONER WALDO'S MISTAKE.

In maintaining that no greater precaution should be taken for the safety of the President of the United States than for that of the Mayor of New York City, Police Commissioner Waldo shows lack of the sense of proportion. He may have intended only to flatter the Mayor by placing him on an equality with the President. That he is mistaken is evident from a consideration of the consequences of the death or injury of the one official as compared with the other.

Much as all well-disposed citizens would regret the death of Mayor Gaynor, such an event would affect the interests only of New York City, which is after all but a part of the United States, though it may imagine that it is "the whole thing" surrounded by a large area of "hinterland." The death of President Taft would have vital consequences for the whole nation, one of the most regrettable of which would be that James Schoolcraft Sherman would become President. It would vitally affect the question who should be the next President. It might be compared to a wave in the ocean, which never ceases until it beats on shores thousands of miles apart. The death of Gaynor would resemble nothing greater than the swell of a steamer on a good-sized lake.

Mr. Waldo should make a tour of the United States, get acquainted with his own country and revise his opinion of the importance of New York City in relation to the whole republic.

DEGENERATES NOT ACCOUNTABLE?

"To hold that a man who would entice a child into some secluded spot for the purpose of lust and murder is in possession of normal and responsible mental equipment is untenable," says a correspondent in The Oregonian today.

"Yes, it is untenable to hold that he is a normal being. Yet degenerates, as a rule, are responsible. That is, they are responsible to the extent of realizing the enormity of their misdeeds, the necessity for concealing them and the consequences that will fall on them if they are caught. If the degenerate did not possess this much of moral consciousness he would not "entice a child into some secluded spot." He would attack in the open, wherever he found his victim, as do the bolder of wild beasts.

The details of the crime almost invariably measure the accountability of the criminal. It is not only right, it is wise to hang such a degenerate as the Holzman murderer.

IF WE ALL DEMANDED COIN.

What would be the consequences if every person receiving payment for property sold were to insist on payment in gold and were to count it, giving no heed to the certificate of the Treasury Department as to the contents of a bag of money? So much time would be consumed in counting money by bank tellers, in counting it again by the recipient, in counting it again every time the recipient paid out a part of it, that banks would be compelled to double or treble their forces, the amount of business transacted by each firm and individual would be reduced and business would be revolutionized. People would be continually going to and fro with bags containing large sums in gold and silver. They would find it necessary to carry arms and hire guards to protect their treasure from robbers.

This question, suggested by the action of Mrs. Dubordieu in Los Angeles, illustrates the extent to which paper representing money credits has revolutionized business and increased the volume of trade. Compare the few scratches of a pen by which a bank teller transfers $100,000 from the account of a customer to that of a customer of another bank with the labor of counting and recounting that sum in gold and transferring it from one bank to another. Consider the treasure trains which would be constantly carrying gold from one city to another to settle balances between banks. Consider the immense increase in the cost of doing business, due to employment of additional men in counting and transporting gold. Even then the volume of business would shrink enormously, for the supply of gold coin is not sufficient to carry through every transaction. For every $20 gold coin in existence hundreds of dollars change hands every day in the form of paper credits—checks, bank notes, drafts, etc. The relation between demand and supply of coin would be entirely changed, gold would become relatively scarce and prices would soar skyward. The friction due to continual counting of money would cause waste of gold and further diminish the supply.

It would harm the whole country if there were many Mrs. Dubordieus, or the Monetary Commission would be called upon to recommend far more radical changes in our financial system than it has contemplated.

WOMEN IN JEWISH LITERATURE.

A writer in the annual number of the Jewish Tribune, published December 15, gives an account of the estimate of woman in Hebrew literature which may surprise some readers. He remarks that non-Jewish writers now and then believe that "the Jewish law dealt harshly with women. She was the chattel of her father and later of her husband. She had neither rights upon her own person nor upon property." But this, says the writer in the Tribune, is a mistake. Hebrew literature, both in the Bible and the Talmud, "has always considered woman the better half of humanity." The very creation of woman, he argues ingenuously, places her higher than man, for Adam was made out of gross raw material, while Eve included nothing that had not been first refined by previous use in Adam himself. This ought to be convincing of itself, but many more facts are adduced to prove that Hebrew literature, as well as the Jewish people, thought highly of women and accorded them a great deal of liberty.

For example, in religious work women had the same rights as men. From such instances as that of Deborah we know that she could be a prophetess. She could lead religious choirs and even compose her own songs for them. She might also compose prayers and recite them in public services, as we learn from the Book of Samuel. See I. Sam. 1:11. This was far in advance of Paul's advice. Paul not only discouraged matrimony, but he forbade women to speak in church and ordered them to be subject to their husbands in all things. The Jewish opinion was that "he who is not married is unworthy of being called a man and is always barred of joy, blessings and good." This doctrine may not be so pleasing to asceticism as Paul's, but it is vastly more sensible.

One regulation which our author cites strikes us as particularly wise. It is enjoined upon a man seeking a wife to study carefully the brothers of his sweetheart. Evidently it is supposed that the rough young men may let many a cat slip from the bag which their more watchful sister would keep out of sight. Moreover, "children mostly inherit the qualities of their mother's brothers." Is this so? The article is one of numerous interesting ones in a notable edition of the Portland publication.

THE PLUMBING TRUST.

Every man in Portland who has had occasion to erect a building will approve of the Government's suit to dissolve the plumbing supply trust. There is no more indefensible combination than that ring of allied monopolies which controls everything connected with plumbing, from the manufacture of washers to the wiping of joints. Manufacturer, jobber, master plumber and journeyman are all in a conspiracy to rob the home-builder and divide the plunder. If the prosecuting officers of Oregon had any conception of their duty they would follow up the Government's suit against the supply trust by bringing suits against the other members of the ring.

It may be pleaded in extenuation that Oregon has no anti-monopoly law. That may be, but President Taft's recent message made clear the fact that, even had the Sherman law never been passed, the oil and tobacco trusts could have been dissolved under the common law and that the Sherman law is practically only the common law reduced to the form of a statute. In fact, similar combinations and monopolies had been enjoined under the common law long before the Sherman law was thought of. It was well enough to reduce this law to statutory form and make it more positive. But in the absence of an anti-trust law in Oregon, the prosecuting officers already have all the law they need. Let them add to it a fair supply of honesty, ability and energy and they can break up the little trusts, which, as has been truly said, are more oppressive than the big ones.

DETECTIVES THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Detective William J. Burns' brilliant work in uncovering the mystery of the McNamara dynamite conspiracy has won him a good deal of praise and a good deal of detraction. One cannot expect persons who sympathize with criminals to think highly of a man who seems born to bring them to punishment. On the other hand, it stands to reason that everybody who detests crime and its promoters will join in glorifying Mr. Burns. His detective work in the McNamara case brought him more conspicuously before the public than anything else he ever did, but it is not perhaps his most difficult achievement. Those who have followed the narratives of some of his cases in McClure's magazine, or who otherwise knew his record, will remember others fully as intricate and some which were even more wonderful.

Burns is not in any sense a literary detective. His method is to go to the scene of a crime, listen to the talk of the people roundabout, observe the circumstances and thus obtain some sort of a clew. When he has once found a clew, though it may be a faint one, he follows it up resolutely to the end. His superiority seems to consist mainly in the ability to judge accurately of the worth of a given piece of circumstantial evidence, or of some careless bit of conversation. What a man of inferior gifts would pass by as of no moment often leads Burns to the goal he desires.

Burns is an opportunist pure and simple. Unlike the detective of literature, he does not preconceive a theory and then proceed to verify it. No doubt he always has theories. No great man ever does much without them. But he keeps his theories well under subjection and never permits them to override the facts. The work of the literary detective is deductive, and for that reason it appears all the more marvelous to the reader. He seems to create a world in his own mind and by the marvelous power of his reason make it exactly reproduce the unknown elements in the real world. He charms the reader by proving that the outer universe is really logical through and through and that anybody can manufacture it for himself if his capacity to reason is strong enough. Burns looks upon the world as a tangle with threads running through it. If he can get hold of one of the ends he can feel his way along, but he never tries to predict where the thread will lead him. Or if he does predict, it is with many reservations and infinite caution. Burns is scientific in his methods. The detective of literature is theoretical.

There is no doubt that Burns is a man of genius. When we compare what he does habitually with the failures of the ordinary detective we obtain a measure of his ability. Out of every hundred crimes committed in the United States it is said by good judges that some ninety-five or ninety-six are never brought home to anybody. In other words, our detectives fail to ferret out the wrongdoer, though in every instance there is a clew if anybody bright enough to see it were on the spot. Frequently when the obvious clew is observed the ability to pursue it is lacking. Burns is never blind to whatever clew there may be in sight, and he rarely misses the goal it leads to.

In detective stories the Sherlock Holmes, Lecocq, or whoever the worker of miracles may be, is usually contrasted with the ordinary police much to his glory and the latter's shame. The official crime hunter does not shine in literature. Is his ray any brighter in real life? How many officials have we in this country who begin to compare with Burns? Why is it that we cannot catch our criminals, and if we do catch them, can so seldom obtain evidence enough to convict them? Why are we reverting to the medieval method of torture to obtain evidence of crime if not because our detectives have proved incompetent exactly as Conan Doyle represents them in the Sherlock Holmes stories?

Still, granting that in this respect the detective stories are true to life, we cannot say that we are entirely without objections to them. They are interesting enough. We do not complain of their dullness, though we must confess, to our sorrow, that the last Sherlock Holmes tale does drag a little. The catastrophe is so obvious that it is not very creditable to the miracle-worker. But that is of no moment just now. Our objection is of the same sort as Mark Twain's to the usual Sunday school book of his youth. He complained that these books gave boys false expectations about what was likely to happen to them in life. There was always some benevolent old gentleman intervening to help them out of difficulties. Some lucky chance would happen to save them from the hard necessity of thinking and working.

So it is in detective tales, though in a different line, of course. The literary detective does not need to meet the real world face to face and solve its problems by the calculus of actual investigation. He can do it all in his mind, sitting coseily by his fireside. All the help he needs is an occasional dose of morphine. These stories, teaching as they do an entirely false view of detective work, have been so popular in recent years that they may have operated disastrously on the character of our police officers. They may have been indoctrinated with the notion that they ought to ferret out crime as Sherlock Holmes does, and if it cannot be done in that way it cannot be done at all. How much of the undeniable inefficiency of our police work is attributable to some such subtly poisonous influence?

The success of Mr. Burns is not only a fine thing in itself, but it may possibly act as a corrective to the prevalent adoration of literary detectives who are so fascinating in books and so helpless in the face of an actual crime.

There is something wrong with our inheritance laws when a man can by will leave $2,000,000 to a strange woman and not a penny to his wife. Whatever a man's prejudices or preferences may be, he ought to be compelled to provide for his family before he heaps favors on others. Considered from the point of view of the general welfare, a man's property is only partially his own. There are many proper limitations upon its use. The right to dispose of it by will was created by law and the law should see that it is not used for wrongful purposes.

The President of Northwestern University, Illinois, hopes to extirpate college snobbery by altering the architecture of his buildings. We are doubtful of his success. Snobbery is a disease of the soul which has persisted through all the ages. It was about as virulent in Athens with all the Doric columns of the Parthenon for an antidote as it is at Harvard. The one remedy which has ever proved efficacious against snobbery is work, and of course that is out of the question at a modern university.

China having been favored with a note from the Western powers to the effect that "war in the Orient must cease," cannot in politeness do less than reply in the same vein. She will order Russia to stop fighting in Persia, Italy to withdraw her arms from Africa and France to make peace in Morocco. When the notes both ways have been obeyed all the world will be at peace. We anxiously await the blessed consummation.

There may be some connection between the Wabash Railroad receivership and the purchase of a $500,000 necklace by one Gould and a Scotch estate by another. More attention to railroading and less to jewelry and less imitation of British aristocracy by the Goulds might have kept the Wabash on its feet.

By delivering a letter addressed to Santa Claus to State Senator Kellaher Postmaster Merrick has made a start in conferring a degree of honor that should be continued the rest of the week. There are other 250-pounders who ought to be benevolent besides the Lellicose Senator from Multnomah.

Slight difference in circumstances saves many a young woman from the fate of the little waitress who ended a short life of turmoil and trouble by drinking laudanum at Medford, and if there be any lesson in her career and end it should impress itself on the men who make such affairs possible.

In her contract with Frohman, Edna Goodrich may safely be assumed to have capitalized the notoriety growing out of her divorce from Nat Goodwin. It would be business, too, for being Goodwin's wife for ever so short a term should bring monetary compensation.

If the stork refuses to surprise a man with a baby in the good, old-fashioned way, his wife has no alternative but to adopt one and put it in his Christmas stocking.

If Congress will vote the $100,000 necessary to make roads in Crater Lake Park, that wonder of Oregon will rival Yellowstone and Yosemite as an attraction to tourists.

The people of Indianapolis and Muncie must have had an ex post facto thrill when they learned that they had lived in close proximity to so much dynamite.

Twenty-one million pounds of meat were condemned in this country this year, destroying by that much the dog's chances of escaping the sausage mill.

Lowell observatory makes the statement that there is no frost at the Martian Pole. There lies Dr. Cook's opportunity to come back.

The cut in water rates comes at the right time to encourage the bibulous to climb on the water wagon at the opening of the year.

Mrs. William Golden must have a nervous headache whenever she tries to determine her relationship to her own relatives.

The alleged white woman recently wedded to a negro at Vancouver denies the lack of color in the report.

The surest indicator of Portland's growth and prosperity is the proposed reduction of the water rate.

Senator Borah thinks three years' residence on a homestead is enough. It is, in the sagebrush.

This is the shortest day of the year, especially to the man who arises early and does much work.

Return of a few unfaithful paroled men may improve the others who are out.

Stars and Star-Makers

By Leone Cass Baer.

A Pittsburg crematory concern is worrying itself—unduly, perhaps, but just the same worrying—about whether the ashes of all that is mortal of E. H. Sothern, when he has passed away, are to be placed in an urn in its crematory and then scattered over the seas with those of Julia Marlowe, his wife. The actress many years ago purchased an urn in Pittsburg when on a visit to the crematory. In writing she decreed that receptacle should hold her ashes after death. She purchased another also with the understanding that the ashes of her then husband, Robert Tabor, be placed therein after death, and that when both had departed the ashes should be mixed and carried in one urn and scattered over the sea. Since her second marriage the crematory people are wondering whether Sothern will assume that part of the pact agreed upon by his wife's first husband. The concern says that the wishes of the actress regarding her urn will be respected, but so far neither Mr. nor Mrs. Sothern has intimated what is to be done with the other urn.

* * *

Ann Murdock, who created the role of Margery in Henry W. Savage's production of Rupert Hughes' farce, "Excuse Me," and whose pronounced cleverness has established her among the favorite players of the younger generation, suffered a rather peculiar accident during the performance of the play recently in Chicago. In the second act an actor playing opposite Miss Murdock, in making a gesture, unintentionally struck her a blow on the temple. The shock was so forceful Miss Murdock sunk unconscious to the floor. The curtain was rung down and the orchestra played two selections while an understudy was dressing for the part. Miss Murdock revived in sufficient time, however, and when the curtain went up again was received with tremendous applause, and at the end of the act an individual curtain call.

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Stellar lights to visit Portland this Winter include Blanche Bates, Elsie Janis, Anna Held and Maude Adams.

* * *

"The Girl in the Train," considered by many to be the best American version of any foreign musical comedy taken over in half a dozen years, is to include Portland in its itinerary next Spring.

* * *

"Madame Sherry" is to be with us again in January.

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Oliver Morosco, Pacific Coast theatrical producer and manager, is invading the East. Under his management, Dick Tully's "The Bird of Paradise" will be given its first Eastern presentation in Albany, N. Y., Christmas day, remaining in that city a week; then will follow one week each in Rochester and Baltimore, after which the play will open for a run at the Maxine Elliott Theater in New York City, the opening date being January 15. On the same night "The Fox," also under Morosco management, will be produced at another New York house. Both openings will come somewhat earlier than originally planned, and consequently Oliver Morosco will be compelled to hasten his departure Eastward. He had expected to remain in Los Angeles until after the first of the year, but now plans to be in Albany Christmas day.

* * *

A complete new stock company, "The Myrtle Vane" players, has taken possession of the Lois Theater in Seattle. Their opening night was last Saturday, when they presented Sardou's "La Tosca." The roster includes several people known in Portland. Eva Earl French is character woman; Eddie Lawrence, a former Bakeronian, is character comedian, and Walter McCullough is leading man.

* * *

Gaby Deslys has gone into the beauty business as a rival to Lillian Russell. She is contributing literary splashes to a syndicate, which informs the feminine community at large how to keep young and attractive (at so much per week).

* * *

Fritzi Scheff, the opera star, has announced that she never will again appear on the stage, owing to an affection of her throat. It is rumored that a disagreement between Madame Scheff and the managtment of "The Duchess," in which she starred, is the real cause of the trouble. Apropos of the affair is the following:

Rennold Wolf, who writes the dramatic gossip for the New York Telegraph, is capable of saying some things of a peculiarly humorous kind, despite the wholly partisan and sometimes foolishly bitter things he writes of those against whom he directs the flow of his ink. His well-known hostility to the Shuberts is makes the basis for paragraphs of much spleen. The other day he struck a real funny note in a parody on an old and childish memory. Speaking of Fritzi Scheff's habit of leaving her company and refusing to appear, Mr. Wolf said:

"Members of the Fritzi Scheff Company, who are still wondering when their star will return, and when the tour of The Duchess will be resumed, have learned a new prayer which they say nightly before retiring. It is as follows:

"'Now I lay me off again,
I pray the Lord my soul sustain;
If we should close before I wake,
Give my regards to Lee and Jake.'"

Lee and Jake Shubert are Miss Scheff's managers.

* * *

Eugene Walter and David Belasco are reported to have made up their differences and the playwright has completed "The Assassin," a play suggested when he met the funeral procession following the body of Petrosino, the Italian detective. Almost over night he completed a scenari, which he showed to Frederic Thompson. For various reasons the production was delayed until finally Charles Dillingham acquired the rights, and now the arrangement with Belasco has been completed through Dillingham.

* * *

Marc Klaw filed on Monday in the United States Circuit Court his answer to the suit brought against him by Fanny Ward Lewis for breach of contract. He admits that on April 27, 1909, he signed a contract, but this was by mutual consent afterward destroyed, thus relieving him of all obligations. In asking for the dismissal of the writ, Klaw maintains that at any time since the plaintiff could have secured a contract as good as that which was canceled.

Liquors by Mail.

MIST, Or., Dec. 19.—(To the Editor.)—Will you kindly inform me whether or not a carrier of the United States mails has a right to carry intoxicating liquors and deliver the same to customers or individuals?

CONSTANT READER.

Vinous, spirituous or malt liquors are not admissible to the United States mails.

Half a Century Ago

From The Oregonian, December 21, 1861.

Colonel Forney writes from Washington to the Philadelphia Press: "In my comments upon the lamented Colonel Baker I stated that, in addition to his many other intellectual gifts, he was a fine poet—a mark that was received by many with surprise. I am permitted to publish one of his fugitive pieces, written by him 12 years ago and now in possession of an intimate friend in this city. Observe how the last verse applies to his fate:"

Dost thou seek a star with thy swelling crest,
O wave that leavest thy mother's breast?
Dost thou leap from the prisoned depths below
In scorn of their calm and constant flow?
Or art thou seeking some distant land
To die in murmurs upon the strand?

Hast thou tales to tell of pearl-lit deep,
Where the wave-whelmed mariner rocks in sleep?
Canst thou speak of navies that sunk in pride
Ere the roll of their thunder in echo died?
What trophies, what banners, are floating free
On the shadowy depths of that silent sea?

It were vain to ask, as thou rollest afar,
Of banner or mariner, ship or star;
It were vain to seek in thy stormy face
Some tale of the sorrowful past to trace.
Thou art swelling high, thou art flashing free,
How vain are the questions we ask of thee!

I too am a wave of a stormy sea;
I too am a wanderer, driven like thee;
I too am seeking a distant land
To be lost and gone ere I reach the strand.
For the land I seek is a waveless shore
And they who once reach it shall wander no more.

On the second of March, 1839, Elwin O. Hall, then printer of the Honolulu Mission, under the auspices of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and since editor of the Polynesian, accompanied by his wife, sailed from the Sandwich Islands for the Presbyterian mission, on the Clearwater River, in what was then Oregon, but now Washington Territory, in charge of Rev. H. H. Spaulding, bringing a printing press, font of types, paper, ink, materials, binding apparatus, etc., to the value of $500 or thereabouts.

Mr. Hall arrived in the Columbia River on April 23 of that year and proceeded with all dispatch to the said station, which he reached, together with the press, early in May, 1839, and soon thereafter commenced the printing of elementary spelling books in the Nez Perce and Flathead languages, which were adopted and used by the various mission schools.

The mission in charge of Mr. Spaulding and at which said press was established was located on the River Clearwater, about 125 miles northeast of old Fort Walla Walla, among the Nez Perces Indians. This river was called by the Rev. Mr. Parker Koots—Koosie, or Little Water.

In the Spring of 1840 Mr. Hall and his lady, after having established the first press and printed the first book in the Pacific American possessions, returned to the Sandwich Islands.

The public school examination yesterday was well attended by ladies and gentlemen. . . . In the afternoon Miss Sarah White read the productions in the Young Ladies' Journal, edited by the young female students, and Master Ankeny read the paper entitled the Radicator and edited by the male students belonging to the higher department. . . . The singing and reciting in concert by the intermediate departments could not be beat anywhere. Masters Burton, Gleason, Robertson, Sampson, Barrell and Hendee, each of which must not have been over 6 years old, made quite handsome speeches. At the conclusion of the exercises the scholars presented the school directors with a Christmas cake, for which Mr. Holman and Mr. Failing thanked them with very stirring remarks and divided the cakes among the children.

From Mr. L. Day, Tracy & Co.'s express messenger, who arrived last night on the Julia, we learn that he brought $30,000 in gold dust; also that news had been received from Powder River that diggings had been struck at that locality paying from 10 to 20 ounces per day to the hand, and that the gold is very coarse, much resembling the California gold.

The Mountaineer tells the story that a miner, while on his way to Salmon River, struck rich diggings, and that having no bag for his gathered gold, he filled one of his India rubber boots with it and at the last date was filling the other.

The Statesman mentions a rumor that there had been trouble with the Indians at the Siletz reservation. Rumor has gone so far as to say that the Indians have compelled the whites to take refuge in the block houses.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF MURDERERS

Writer Argues That Acts of Degenerates Disclose Their Irresponsibility.

CENTRALIA, Wash., Dec. 18.—(To the Editor.)—In The Oregonian December 16, there appears an editorial entitled "Pertinent Questions" which deals with the death penalty and kindred ideas. Permit me to ask a few questions which seem "pertinent" at this time.

Should society seek to punish the individual who commits a crime because of "debased and perverted human passion?"

Is the mentally deficient or perverted individual responsible for his deficiency or perversion?

Would it be just to hang an insane criminal?

Where are you going to draw the line between murders committed by persons accounted normal mentally and those who are the victims of hereditary defects?

To hold that a man who would entice a child into some secluded spot for the purpose of lust and murder is in possession of a normal and responsible mental equipment is untenable. The act itself is proof of degeneracy. Would it be right to hang a degenerate?

No two human minds are governed by the same impulses. There is no absolute standard of mental responsibility. "Back of every human thought and action there is sufficient cause" and to demand of the dismatured, degenerate, and inherently vicious, the same accountability that we exact from those who have no weaknesses that are apparent is manifestly unjust.

It is undeniably true that perverts are menaces to society and that protection is essential, but when that protection takes the form of blood-craving savagery and revenge, we are going back to the days when civilization had little of which to boast.

It is cheaper to hang a man than it is to keep him properly safeguarded for life, but the revulsion of feeling occasioned by the cold, premeditated, unmerciful and diabolical legal hanging, is more damaging to the peace and happiness of a community than the deprivation of the slight sum per capita required to maintain the criminal for life.

I am not surprised at the attitude of those who think they are good Christians in their insistence upon the enforcement of the death penalty. Their reasoning processes, like their religion may be compared in some respects to those of the "dismatured" and perverted criminal who murders a 6-year-old girl. They are more to be pitied than censured.

DR. SETH C. MAKER.

On Mental Shopping

By Dean Collins.

Nescius Nitts, he whose wise remarks, dropping
On Punkindorf's ears, kept their eyes fairly popping,
Saw a frivolous flea on the floor fleetly hopping,
And soon in a nicotine lake it was flopping;
Then Nescius spake on improved Christmas shopping.

"I've jest talked with Philomel Love, who had went
To the city—three days and his wages was spent—
And he tells about this here late Christmas rush
A-swarmin' all round, and the scurry and crush
Of people a-crowdin' the streets, every one
A-jumpin' to git all their late shoppin' done.

"I tells you I figgers that us folks who waits
To shop till we come to the very last dates,
Ain't nigh half so wise as them other folks that are
Maintainin' the power of mind over matter;
For if that idee is correct, then they've not
No 'casion to rush like us others have got.

"They claims things mater'al, whatever you find,
Is merely a product rolled out of the mind,
That pain and disease and all sech aggravation
Is purely sprung forth from mankind's 'magination,
And brickbats and autos, seegars, and sech junk
Are likewise results of the thoughts we have thunk.

"Consider then, how that idee would help out
In dodgin' the crush of the late shoppin' rout;
Sence why go and buy, when all things in creation
Are sprang from mankind's overwrought 'magination?
Far better jest set, and send out to your friend
Imagin'ry gifts as you choose, without end.

"Thus one could imagine fine big tourin' cars,
And send his friends bushels of psychic seegars;
And I need not buy, but could jest set and chaw
And 'magine silk shawls fer my daughters-in-law,
And all Christmas shopping with ease I could shirk
If I could jest make this here mind-science work."

Portland, December 20.

WEBSTER SECOND IN HIS CLASS

Valedictorian Once Denied That Statesman Was Churlish About It.

SALEM, Dec. 19.—(To the Editor.)—In The Oregonian, December 10, is an article concerning Daniel Webster and his college diploma, in which it is said that, because the faculty had conferred the valedictory upon other than himself, he tore up his diploma in the presence of some of his classmates in the campus, through chagrin, saying: "My industry may make me a great man, but this miserable parchment cannot."

This whole proceeding may surprise most readers, but anyone who has studied the life and the speeches, as well as the letters and other private utterances of Webster, in which he always spoke in the most endearing terms of his "alma mater," will hesitate to believe that Daniel Webster ever descended to the ill-natured and churlish action thus recorded of him, probably by some writer who may have imagined he had found something new that would astonish the world and give point to a newspaper article. The fact is, a story similar in details was related of Webster many times, after he had become celebrated, and the writer of this heard it more than 60 years ago. The story, as I then heard it, was to the effect that, after the graduating exercises were over, Webster took his successful competitor back of the college building and told him that, notwithstanding his success over him now, in after years he (Webster) "would be as far above him as the heavens are above the earth."

In the Spring of 1850 I was residing temporarily in Jacksonville, Ill., the seat of Illinois College, and I made the acquaintance of many connected with the college, professors and students. Among them was a Mr. Coffin, an old gentleman of about 70 years, who was connected with the institution in some subordinate capacity, probably as janitor; at any rate, he was not a teacher. I learned that he had been a classmate of Daniel Webster at Dartmouth College, and had carried off the honor as valedictorian at the graduating exercises.

At the time of which I am speaking Webster had just made his famous seventh of March speech, and the whole country was ringing with praise on the one hand and denunciation on the other, of the great statesman for his views as propounded in that speech. One day, in familiar conversation, I made bold to ask Mr. Coffin about the college occurrence, and whether he had ever heard of the story. He turned to me without the least surprise and said he had often heard of the ridiculous story, but that it was a "lie made up out of whole cloth." He seemed not to know how it had originated, nor where, nor to care anything about it at that late day, as he and Mr. Webster had always been friendly, and were yet so, as letters in his possession would show.

Afterward, while living in Washington, I often saw Webster in the Capitol and on the street, and, on the supposition that the story was true, when contrasting, the appearance and the reputation of the two individuals, one of them old, snaggle-toothed, of the lean and slippered pantaloon order, acting as janitor in a college, and the other, striding the world like a Colossus, with the look and bearing of Jupiter, I thought many times how truly the latter had forecasted the future of each, from the college yard. D. W. CRAIG.

"Tama Jim's" Modest Needs.

Washington Cor. New York World.

Logan Waller Page, the director of public roads of the Agricultural Department, received a good business offer the other day, and went to see "Tama Jim" Wilson about it. "I never advise anybody about offers to leave the Government service," said Secretary Wilson, "and I'm not going to advise you what to do. Since I have been at the head of the Agricultural Department a good many alluring propositions from the financial point of view have come my way, too, some of them recently. But while I am not a rich man by any means, I have always figured that I could only live in one house at a time, sleep in one bed at a time, and eat one meal at a time, and that's all any man really needs."

State Abbreviations.

PORTLAND, Dec. 20.—(To the Editor.)—Please state what the official abbreviation of Oregon is and also who decides the official abbreviation of a state. Respectfully,

A SUBSCRIBER.

Custom decides the abbreviation of state name. "Or." or "Ore." is a proper abbreviation for Oregon.