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PORTLAND, THURSDAY, DEC. 21, 1916.

LET WAR ISSUES BE DEFINED.

The reception given by the entente powers to the central powers' proposal for a peace conference is not, judged by first impressions, encouraging. With one accord they reaffirm their former assertions of the principles for which they are fighting. They express confidence in their ability to make those principles triumphant. They express distrust of the sincerity of their enemies' professed desire for peace. They support these declarations by voting more money, raising more armies, drawing still further on their resources and reorganizing their governments for more effective prosecution of the war.

But first impressions may be misleading in this case, as they have often been in other cases. The contending alliances have hitherto stated their purposes in general terms. The proposal for a conference will tend to bring them down to particulars. Mr. Lloyd George says that the allies will not decide for or against a conference until they "hear what terms and guaranties the German government offers." Germany has probably foreseen a request that, before the allies consent to a conference, they be informed what basis of agreement the central powers are prepared to propose, and may be prepared to define this basis. When imparting this information to the enemy, Germany would ask, and establish a right to receive, like information from him. Each would then know more definitely where the other stood. Each would realize that, if it should elect to continue the war rather than accept the terms which could be arranged now, it would risk defeat and the exaction of more onerous terms later. Contemplation of this risk will act as a check on the natural disposition to include in the first definition of terms demands which the present situation does not justify and which the other party would grant only if overpowered beyond denial.

The German Chancellor's boast of victory and the Kaiser's message to his troops that he had proposed peace in the "full consciousness of victory" are taken by some newspapers as signs that Germany approaches the subject of peace with the air of a conqueror. Like unfavorable comment might be made on the allies' self-gratulation on the conquest of the German colonies, destruction of German commerce, blockade of the German coast and the privations to which it has subjected the German people; also on their boasts of having won superiority in men and war material. It is to be expected that before stating their terms, each will make the most of the points in its favor, and put on a brave front.

The central powers are suspected in some quarters of having made their proposal for the purpose of influencing public opinion among their own people, among enemy nations and among neutrals. They are suspected of a desire to steel the hearts of their own people for greater sacrifices by obtaining proof that their national integrity and independence are at stake, in the expectation that such proof would win the sympathy of many among neutrals, and would strengthen the peace party in the countries of the entente. But if the entente powers can show their aims to be fully consistent with the high principles which they profess and not to include designs on the integrity of any nation, they have nothing to fear from enlightenment of the public in all countries. The time has come for a statement of the manner in which they propose to apply their principles.

The allies proclaim that they fight for the independence and integrity of small nations; for the right of each nation to work out its own destiny. Does this mean that they would annex the Serb population of Hungary to Serbia; Transylvania to Roumania; Galicia, Posen and West Prussia to a restored Poland? If that be their purpose, and if they can make a good case, it will win support for them among the people affected and in neutral countries. There has been little concealment of a desire to wipe out the Turkish empire. That event would cause little sorrow in the civilized world; but what do they propose to do with the territory in question? It has been announced that Russia is to have Constantinople, and presumably the adjoining country, but what of the rest? Bad as the Turks are, they are a nation and have a right to a national existence, though no other nation should be under their rule. Would the allies put them on a sort of reservation in Asia and carve up the rest of Turkey among them?

The allies express their determination to destroy the domination of the Prussian military caste, which, they say, has bullied Europe and forced other nations to maintain great armies. This has been construed in Germany to mean the destruction of Germany. If they mean only to destroy the power of the ruling class, why not enlighten the German people by saying so? If they have no desire to destroy Germany as a great, independent nation, or to cramp its self-development, they can, by making their purpose plain, add much strength to the peace party in Germany. If the dominance of a military oligarchy be the chief obstacle to peace, many Germans would refuse to suffer further for its sake.

There has been too much censoring of opinion, too much suppression of truth, in all belligerent countries. It has prevented, or seriously restricted discussion of the very questions which we have raised. Even where such discussion could not be prevented by official censors as being "calculated to give aid to the enemy," there has been a disposition to discourage it as likely to cause disunion and to supply the enemy with arguments for continuing the war. Neutral countries are the great open forums for discussion of the issues at stake in the war. A clearer definition of terms, as a preliminary to a peace conference, though it should not now lead to a conference, would be of great value to the cause of peace, provided all the documents were freely published in all belligerent countries. It should clear the air of some misunderstandings which are always a hindrance to peace.

It is significant that several of the great pro-ally newspapers of the East showed far more disposition to credit Germany with sincerity when its willingness to join in limitation of armaments and in a league to enforce peace was announced. The former proposal was rejected by Germany at The Hague and is not likely to be accepted from that quarter until bitterness and distrust have much abated. The allies may object that vindication of the principles for which they are fighting is a necessity before they can enter into any agreement to prevent future wars, but that implies a desire, after having arranged matters to their liking, to prevent that arrangement from being disturbed. If they should be so completely successful as to force their enemies into such an arrangement, the latter would feel justified in violating it at the first opportunity. No such arrangement could be permanent if founded on total overthrow of one party to the war.

The United States and other neutral countries have far more than the academic interest of disinterested parties in restoration of peace. Though they gain in many ways by the sufferings of their neighbors—enormously in the case of this Nation—they lose at many points, and those who look only a short distance into the future foresee that the loss they must ultimately bear will far outweigh any temporary gain. President Wilson voiced the opinion of many when he said that this country would not be able to keep out of the next great war, if this war should be followed by another. For that reason, we have an interest in ending this war so that there shall not be another. If the present slaughter should be continued for two or three years, the white race may be reduced to such a position of inferiority that it might be overwhelmed by the hordes of Asia whenever some modern Tamerlane should organize them on modern lines. Americans would not shirk, but do not desire, the duty of being the last bulwark of Occidental civilization.

THE PEOPLE AND THE MAYOR-ELECT.

The Oregonian had a little article the other day on the recent remarkable city election at Astoria, culminating in the sweeping victory of the highly ornate and always picturesque F. C. Harley for Mayor. To the impartial, but interested, view of the outsider, it seemed that the triumph of Mr. Harley was, in part at least, a grateful appreciation of his service in procuring, or attempting to procure, for the Lower Columbia the much-desired United States naval base.

The Oregonian is now assured from private sources that matters of National concern had no real bearing on the campaign, but that Mr. Harley was elected by the "open-town" element.

In proof there is submitted a verbatim report of an address made by Mayor-elect Harley the other night, before a mass meeting of his friends and supporters, which may be fitly described as "rousing." It is offered as an outspoken revealment of the Harley method and the Harley purpose.

The speech seems to have been regarded as of high importance in Astoria, for it is given front-page position, next to the war news and Lloyd George, in the Daily Astorian. An examination of its text which seems to have been faithfully transcribed from the Harley utterance with certain characteristic grammatical infelicities, shows that the Mayor-elect alluded to his late opponent as the "rough-neck candidate." The new Mayor was for the "public market without any strings." He was for a "public landing for fish-boats." He was for a "municipal band to play once a week in the streets and every Sunday in the parks." He was for "a public bath-house." And, said the Mayor-elect fervidly, "there'll be a policeman in the water all the time to keep the kids from being drowned." The police would not be allowed to arrest any little boys.

"If," continued the enthusiastic Harley, amidst a roar of rapturous applause, "if a man is arrested for intoxication and the officer don't take him home to his family, but takes him to jail, then the officer had better look for another job there and then." We assume, of course, that the promise of solicitous and tender police protection to befuddled citizens was intended more in the nature of polite reassurance than as a declaration of policy; for how can there be any such thing as intoxication in an extra-dry town like Astoria?

The fire department, promised Mr. Harley, will have new uniforms; and "there's something else that's too delicate to discuss before the ladies. We'll give the people what they want." We confess we do not understand this mysterious reference of the cautious Mayor-elect. Perhaps it is as well that we should not.

Now comes the reference which appears to have stirred Astoria from sea wall to water works:

> The minute the red flag shows that means get ready, for we are going to march down the street in a body to teach some of these soreheads that they got to respect the workingman's conditions. I don't care for myself. I don't think they got the nerve to come out against the majority I got. But just let them start to choke off something you want—like with an injunction. That's the way they try it. And if you stand for that sort of brow-beating I don't want to be your Mayor. I don't want to live here even.
>
> Your Mayor will head the parade and we'll march down the street howling and rearing like lions, and teach the soreheads the people have got to be respected.

One can easily surmise that the sovereign people of Astoria, who gave Mr. Harley a vote of three to one—1800 to 600—are going to get what they voted for. If they do not, it will be because he doesn't know what they want.

In the days of railroad construction in the West, the foremen on the grade, who knew a thing or two about the practical side of feeding men, were wont to tell the cooks to "use plenty of molasses; it saves on the meat bills." This homely principle is now recognized officially by the United States Department of Agriculture in a bulletin in which housewives are urged to make free use of molasses and syrups in the family cooking. It is asserted that in a 10-cent can of molasses there are eight and a quarter times as much heat and energy as in 10 cents' worth of fresh beef, two and two-thirds as much as in 10 cents' worth of butter, two and three-fourths as much as in bacon costing the same, ten and one-third times as much as in 10 cents' worth of eggs, five times as much as in 10 cents' worth of ham, and nearly twice as much as in an equivalent amount of cereal and cream. Syrups are not urged as a complete substitute, or as a single article of diet, but as a "satisfying" article of food and a producer of energy, and as a measure of "keeping down the meat bills."

SNEERING AT THE MOTHERS.

> Why these efforts to get the Oregon Guardsmen home from the border? We have a good battery and a good cavalry troop down on the boundary line, where they are needed because of troubled conditions in Mexico. But at the request of Portland citizens Congressman McArthur has been begging the War Department to send the Oregon boys home. The Oregonian has been trying to help out in this ignoble cause.
>
> Is there not something discordant between Oregon's alleged valor on election day and the sudden home-and-mother spirit that seems to have overtaken some of our people?—Pendleton East Oregonian (Dem.).

Only two newspapers in Oregon—one at Pendleton and another at Portland—are protesting against the return of the Oregon boys from the border. Only two—these same twain—have sneered at the natural and irrepressible longing of the boys for home and have made a jest and a jeer of the cry of the mothers to take their absent sons once more in their arms.

Not long ago we heard from these same voices that Mexico was none of our business and ought to be left to welter in its own blood, and there was vehement and abusive protest against intervention and incessant demand that our boys be kept at home. Do you want your boy to go a-soldiering, it was loudly asked, and have him slain by Mexicans and leave his bones to bleach and rot under the Mexican sun? But now there is a strange and contemptuous indifference to his fate. Why is it?

Meanwhile, it is keenly realized in Oregon and everywhere that the United States Government is requiring of volunteers service which ought to be performed by the regular Army. If it be replied that the regular Army is not equal to the emergency, it may well be asked why it is not?

PASSING OF THE PATRIARCHS.

The mortuary column of The Oregonian contained yesterday an unusual number of familiar names, all passengers of the Great Ferryman, and several of them old-time residents of the state. The biblical limit of a useful life is seventy years; but the record of a single day in Portland suggests that the inspired authority wrote of another period and another continent.

There was one on the roll who had reached the unusual age of 93 years and 10 months, and he had retained his faculties and vigor to the last, except that he had been crippled by an accident; and another had passed in the ripe maturity of his mental powers at 87 years. A pioneer of 1852 had joined the innumerable caravan at 76, and others closed the page at the respective limits of 82 years, 72 years and 69 years.

A few years ago a venerable mother died in Oregon at 119 years, and a year ago a well-known pioneer preacher said farewell at 98 years. There have been several cases of longevity exceeding 100 years, and there are men active in business and affairs today who have passed the eightieth milestone.

It is said that men and women live longer than formerly. We have some extraordinary biblical statements to confound this assumption; but certain it is that the average man and the average woman live longer than the same average man and woman lived a few years ago. (We expect the grammarians to find fault with the latter assertion; but let it stand. Its meaning is plain.) If one might be betrayed into the old joke that life now merely seems longer, the retort may be offered that there are more interesting and vital things in the world now, making life worth living, than ever.

FREE SPEECH.

An interesting controversy over the right of free speech is engaging the courts of Connecticut and promises to be taken to the highest court in the land. That it arose in the course of a "wet" and "dry" contest is only incidental to the main question, although this accounts in some measure for the bitterness that has entered into it, while the fact that the state found it necessary to invoke a statute enacted in 1642 and therefore commonly called a "blue law" lends further interest to the case. The defendant is on trial for the crime of blasphemy committed in a public place.

It seems that in a corner of the town of Waterbury, populated by about 10,000 Lithuanians, a fight between the church attended by some of the Lithuanians and the defenders of the saloon had been raging for some time. The Free Thinkers' Alliance entered the fight and sent to Waterbury a Lithuanian lecturer named Mockus. In the third of three speeches this lecturer spoke the words upon which the charges against him are based. Some of them are not printable. Among the mildest of his assertions was one that "God is a liar"; another was that "this teaching of Jesus is only good for thieves and robbers." Mockus was once convicted by a jury and appealed his case. On another trial, the jury stood eleven for conviction to one for acquittal. This jury was composed of eight men of no church affiliations, two Episcopalians, one Methodist and one Catholic.

Mockus, as was to have been expected, made a militant witness in his own defense. As to the statement that "God is a liar," he quoted from Genesis: "But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest of it, thou shalt surely die." Curiously enough, he disclaimed authority for the statement on his own account by asserting that "God inspired the writing of the Bible, so that the statement therein must be his." Explaining his statement that "this teaching is only good for thieves and robbers," he read from St. Luke, chapter 6, verse 30: "Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also." There was more of this. The testimony embraced the substance of a lecture four hours long.

Another remarkable feature of the case was the character of the forces that rallied to the support of Mockus. The Free Thought Alliance retained one of Waterbury's leading attorneys and also employed a New York lawyer, expert in free speech litigation and secretary of the Free Speech League, of which at one time, if not at present, Brand Whitlock, Norman Hapgood, Bolton Hall and other noteworthy men were members. So that the controversy eventually took the outward form, at least, of an effort to defend the right of "free speech," and the specific kind of free speech was lost to sight in greater or less degree. Upon an issue of obscenity, or of plain disorderly conduct in a place of public assemblage, or upon some other ground, Mockus would have appeared less a martyr and more a merely vulgar person, who ought not to be able to win a hearing in an orderly and respectable community. As has been said, some of his language was unprintable. But the forces of "free speech" having rallied to the standard, there was laid the foundation of a cause celebre. If the case is sent back for another trial and Mockus is convicted in the state courts, the celebrated lawyers who have been retained are going to earn their fees by going to the United States Supreme Court at Washington.

It is to be doubted that free speech has anything worth while to gain from espousing the cause of blackguards. There are ways in which theological questions can be discussed, even between believers and so-called unbelievers, that do not offend the common decencies. It is strange how jealous these offenders against the proprieties are of their "rights," and how they constantly confound liberty with license. It is interesting that Mockus came from a country in which not even a small part of the liberty of speech that is the prerogative of every man in America was granted to him, and that he is not yet satisfied with his freedom. Free speech would not be set back a fractional part of time if men like Mockus were punished as common nuisances.

A SEA-LEVEL CANAL NEXT.

There is so wide a margin between the size proposed for the new battleships and the capacity of the Panama Canal locks that, at first sight, there seems to be no danger that ships will ever reach the limit. But comparison shows displacement to have grown so rapidly that it may before many years exceed the limit of 70,000 tons which the locks can accommodate.

In 1896 the keels were laid for several battleships of about 11,500 tons, and in 1903 we advanced to 16,000 tons with the Connecticut. But these were pre-dreadnoughts. When the building of that type began, we advanced to the Delaware of 20,000 tons in 1907, the Florida of 21,825 tons in 1909 and the Nevada of 27,500 tons in 1912. The 30,000 mark was passed in 1915 with the Idaho and Mississippi, of 32,000 tons, and now we are to advance at one leap to 42,600 tons with the ships to be authorized at this session of Congress. Thus the size of battleships has doubled in nine years. If it should double again, the vessels would not be able to use the canal.

The danger of being cramped by such limitations in the future would cause the Government to think twice before it merely enlarged the locks. The canal was built mainly as a measure of defense, that our warships might pass quickly from coast to coast. Congress would not be disposed to expend large sums in enlarging the locks with the risk that again at some time we might lose much service from our biggest ships because they had again outgrown the capacity of the locks. It would be more likely to sweep away all limitations of the kind by lowering the entire canal to sea-level. Our experience with dredging and steam-shoveling has made this a less appalling task than it seemed ten years ago.

Investigators of the lynching of a negro at Abbeyville, S. C., some weeks ago have brought out the fact that the affair was as unprovoked and outrageous an example of pure mob spirit as has occurred in many years, and the fact that the changing industrial situation in the North has made new opportunities for southern negroes has played some part, it is probably not unfair to say, in giving an exceptionally wide hearing to the report of the inquiry. The press of the state is almost unanimous in the demand that the perpetrators be brought to justice, the Governor has announced that the power of the state will be exercised to the fullest extent and the law-abiding citizens of Abbeyville have overruled the mob decree that the sons of the man who was lynched shall leave the county and abandon their property immediately. These citizens are determined that the law shall be upheld even if Federal aid is necessary. With the people themselves aroused, there is a good chance of putting an end to lynching, but it will not come in any other way.

Only 16 years ago Lloyd George was the most bitter opponent of Joseph Chamberlain because of the war. Now he takes the same man's son into the team which is fighting a war compared with which the Boer war resembles a skirmish.

The Japanese is just as human as the white, yet it seems a silly action when one commits suicide on being jilted in love. That is a prerogative of the dominant race.

A 19-year-old wife has turned her 17-year-old husband back to the Juvenile Court to ripen. It is marriages of this kind that make a mockery of the institution.

Mail your packages early in the day. Naturally, a postoffice clerk is in better humor at that time; at any rate, the people in line behind you are.

Train robbery as an industry in Oklahoma has given way to looting of banks by auto robbers. The underworld is speeding up.

Nothing can exceed the pleasure enjoyed by the young couple in their first Christmas tree for the baby.

Every ship will look like that German raider to skippers on the Atlantic for the next few weeks.

That boycott on eggs is languishing. The women folks are too busy with Christmas.

Billy Sunday's reverse English makes Boston go wetter than usual.

Possible sunshine today, the shortest of the year.

Stars and Starmakers

By Leone Cass Baer.

WILL someone please tell me what has become of the old-fashioned actress who was always knitting socks for the boys in the trenches?

* * *

Actress, being interviewed, says she "has never had time to be tempted." It's none of my business, of course, but why doesn't she get on an eight-hour scale and find time?

* * *

Florence Horst has divorced her husband and stage partner, who is one and the same chap, Rudolph Horst.

* * *

Kitty Reed, known as the angel of mercy at the San Francisco Relief Home, and widow of Charles Reed, pioneer minstrel man of California, died last week. She was past 60 and has nursed and cared for old folk in San Francisco's poorhouse for the last 18 years. Her husband had a National reputation as a minstrel man and old-timers in San Francisco theatricals remember him at the old California and Bush-street theaters.

* * *

Anna Marble (Mrs. Channing Pollock) has written a new playlet, "If I Had Married You," which will be produced in vaudeville by Arthur Maitland. Miss Marble is also the author of "Pat and the Genii," which played the Orpheum Circuit several times, and "In Old Eden," in which her cousin, Mary Marble, and Sam Chip were featured a few seasons ago.

* * *

Colonel William Withers, composer and musical director, died Tuesday in New York, at the Home for Incurables, in which institution he had been an inmate for a number of years. Colonel Withers was the leader of the orchestra in Ford's Theater, Washington, D. C., on the night Abraham Lincoln was shot. It is said he was stabbed in the neck by Booth, the assassin. Colonel Withers was 80 years old and is survived by a sister.

* * *

Nora Bayes is going to have an entertainment all by herself and has rented the Eltinge Theater in New York for Christmas eve. Her entertainment will consist of two hours of song by Nora Bayes, and all the profit—or loss—is to be Nora Bayes'.

* * *

From Paris comes chatter about the large amounts of coin Mary Garden is spending on her lingerie, and the hubbub it's raising in the press. The secret was revealed by an order of a Paris court, and all the editorial writers took a fling at poor Mary's lace frills and openwork fripperies. On the day before her departure for America Miss Garden was ordered to turn over her lingerie, valued at $5000, to a board of experts for appraisal.

This action was taken because the singer is being sued for $3500 by a Parisian underwear concern. She is said to have obtained $5000 worth of the lacy things and to have paid only $1500 on account.

"One must be lacking in all decency to cover one's flesh with priceless laces at a moment when women and children are suffering from hunger and cold," says La Bataille. Because it cost $5000 is why it's lingerie. The little one-piece lisle thread sort, at $1.50 a throw, and the torchon lace-trimmed sort are merely underwear.

* * *

Verily, this romance stuff isn't dead, nor is it sleeping. From an exchange I cull the following, a pretty little idea all by itself:

"On September 8 E. L. Goff was posting an eight-sheet for Ed Ferguson's Shows on a barn in Marshfield, Mo., when he saw written on the date, 'Miss Luella Steffy,' and her address in Kansas City. Goff wrote and received an answer ten days later in Pacific, Mo., which happened to be the closing stand of the season. Cards were soon out announcing the marriage of the couple on Thanksgiving day."

* * *

Hassard Short has been added to the company that will support Francis Wilson in "The Laughter of Fools," the comedy soon to be produced by the Charles Frohman Company by arrangement with David Belasco. Mr. Short was seen recently with Cyril Maude in "The Basker." Another member of Mr. Wilson's company will be Eve Le Gallienne, recently seen in "Mr. Lazarus." In "The Laughter of Fools" Miss Le Gallienne will play the part she originated in London.

* * *

Ray Cox, you remember, who had the aviation act and toplined the Orpheum here two years ago, is having an awful time of it in London. Her new act is one in which she takes her first riding lesson on an old, decrepit horse—and New Yorkers who saw it say it is funnier even than the airship one. But over in London, where Ray is the feature of the Hippodrome Revue, the court of justice can't see why she should mind at all, don't you know, if an English music hall chap copies her act and presents it word for word in a hall across the street from the Hip. Miss Cox tried inducing the court to restrain the correct imitator, one Fred Ginnett, charging that he had imitated her copyrighted act, even to the smallest detail of lines and business.

She failed, however, to obtain any satisfaction from the court.

An account says that Justice Horridge seemed to be puzzled and asked Barrister Hastings, who represented Miss Cox, to define more closely the cause of the action, saying that he did not want to try the case for the purpose of letting the public know the respective merits of the two performances.

"I am not going to have this court used for advertising purposes unless I see that there is some real question," said the judge.

Mr. Hastings satisfied the judge on this point.

Miss Cox gave evidence. In America she received a salary of $1000 a week. "They've more money in that country," said Marshall Hall. "They've got all their own and ours, too."

Mr. Ginnett said that most of the jokes employed by Miss Cox had been the same, more or less, for 100 years, and that Miss Cox' sketch was an imitation of his, and he asked for an injunction against her.

The case was adjourned.

* * *

Frederick F. Proctor, Jr., son of the theatrical manager, and himself in the theatrical business, is being sued by his wife for absolute divorce. But the papers are sealed and we can't learn the dirt they're dishing out. Anyway, it seems there's another lady mentioned. There always is. As vice-president and secretary-treasurer of F. F. Proctor, Inc., it is said Proctor's yearly income is more than $30,000.

LET CONVICTS UNLOCK OWN GATE

Man With Experience Says Partiality Is Chief Cause of Bitterness.

CORBETT, Or., Dec. 19.—(To the Editor.)—Judge Belt, of the Twelfth Judicial District, objects to the present indeterminate sentence law on the grounds that it places the time that a convicted person must serve in prison wholly "in the whim and caprice of three members of the Parole Board," an objection which experience has taught me is a valid one. But with all due respect to the Judge, who should bear in mind all Judges are not so fair and well balanced as the is. How much more objectionable is a law that places the power of saying how long a convicted person must remain in prison wholly at the whim and caprice of one man?

I have been in that seething cauldron where the indeterminate sentence law and executive clemency were being administered at the behest of whim and caprice, and the Judge is correct in his surmise that most of the dissension, unrest and dissatisfaction in prison come from such administration.

All mankind wants an even chance. All mankind admires a square deal. Nothing creates rebellion, whether it be in the family, school or prison, like partiality.

I have known some prisoners to receive two or more paroles while others were denied any parole whatever.

I have known those who were doing their third term in prison to be paroled or to receive a conditional pardon while such was denied to men in prison for the first time.

I have known prisoners to be paroled or to receive a conditional pardon before the expiration of their minimum, while others could not get a parole when their minimum was served, though their prison record was good. I have known men with a bad prison record released when those with a good record were not.

I knew one prisoner received with a death sentence over him to have his sentence commuted to life and then be pardoned after serving less time than others doing a sentence of one to ten or one to fifteen years.

I have a record of the cases and can name them.

But why should the time a convicted person must stay in prison depend on any one but himself? I have given a good deal of thought to the subject, both while in and out of prison; have read all I could on the subject, have more than 100 reports of various prisons and prison societies in my possession at present, and have come to this conclusion:

Let the Warden say to the new arrival what the good monk said to George Gordon in "Castaway": "What you have been is nothing to us here. I do not know your past. I do not want to know it. Your minimum sentence is so and so. There is the prison gate. You have the key to it. If at the expiration of your minimum sentence your prison record is good, all the demons in the lower regions cannot keep you here. You will get your parole. On the other hand—courts excepted—all the friends you have in Christendom cannot get you out before. You are on your own merits; now go to it; unlock the gate. I will keep your record."

My observation was that professional lawbreakers opposed the indeterminate sentence, while others favored it. The most important thing about a prison is the kind of men in charge.

SYLVESTER E. EVANS.

NO ACTION ON TUNNEL PROJECT

Hillsdale Community Club Has Done No More Than Discuss It.

HILLSDALE, Or., Dec. 20.—(To the Editor.)—A number of articles have appeared in the papers recently about the residents of districts west of the city wanting a tunnel through the hills. The impression has been made that the Hillsdale Community Club is heartily in favor of such a project. While the subject has been discussed, no action has been taken, either for or against it.

Mr. Henry E. Dosch, the president, is decidedly opposed to such an undertaking at this time. Most of the property owners in the district personally do not deem it urgent and are opposed to putting it through on a local bond issue, as they are paying their share for similar projects in other districts and think this should be paid with a general tax also.

The Hillsboro Highway, which is under way in Washington County and will be part of Multnomah County Spring work, will solve the problem of heavy grades between the Tualatin Basin and Portland. There will be no grade heavier than 4 per cent on this road, which will eventually be part of the State Highway system.

HILDEGARDE PLUMMER,
Secretary Hillsdale Community Club.

CHRISTMAS.

Lov'd ones, have you heard the story
Of that Christmas long ago,
When old Earth to meet the Saviour
Donn'd her robes of whitest snow?

Far away in distant Beth'lem
When the pale Night kissed the Morn
With a Star of peaceful off'ring,
Christ, the wond'rous Babe was born.

In the stable was no cradle,
Mary laid Him in a stall,
While the angels sang in chorus,
"Peace on earth, good will to all."

Thus, as long as time is reckoned,
By the yule log's blazing light
Shall be told the old, old story
Of that first sweet Christmas night.

MAY SHAUGHNESSY HAYES.

Minister Speaks for Oscar Lund.

SALEM, Or., Dec. 20.—(To the Editor.)—I need not say it is a great surprise that the name of Oscar Lund, as he was known here, could be associated with any crime, to say nothing of the crime of murder. During his three or four years' student life in Salem he was known as one of the most amiable, manly and exemplary of the student body, welcome in the best homes and always associated with the best people.

That Oscar could have any acquaintance with that class of men, to say nothing of such a crime, is so remote that no one who knew him could take it seriously. While we regret the embarassment that must of necessity come to Mr. Lund and his friends, we have no doubt that he will immediately be able to clear himself of any suspicion in connection with the affair.

R. N. AVISON,
Pastor First M. E. Church.

Letter to Lottery.

ILWACO, Wash., Dec. 19.—(To the Editor.)—I wish to send a letter to a lottery in Norway, the revenue of which goes to charity. Will mail addressed to a lottery, or bearing the word "lottery" on the envelope, be interfered with by the postoffice authorities?

G. ABEL PATTERSON.

Portland postoffice officials say that the fact that a letter was mailed to an address which contained word "lottery" would not be considered as justifying them in refusing to forward it. They do not have the right to open letters to determine whether they relate to business of a lottery. If, however, they had positive information that the letter related to lottery business it would be treated as unmailable.

Well Known.

From the New York Times.

They sat looking at her engagement ring.

"Did your friends admire it?" he tenderly inquired.

"They did more than that," she replied. "Three of them recognized it."

Roumania and the Fortunes of War.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—How Roumania has fared in times gone by in the course of wars between her neighbors is strikingly shown in a statement prepared for the National Geographic Society by Ralph A. Graves the distinguished writer and traveler.

"For a thousand years the country was the shuttle-cock in the game of political battledore and shuttle-cock staged by the rival sovereigns of Europe — Russia, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Turkey. Once Peter the Great established a protectorate over the Roumanians. Then came Catherine the Great with a plan to annex them to Russia. Austria, afraid that such a course meant Russian territorial expansion in a direction that threatened her, objected so vehemently that Catherine reconsidered and Moldavia and Wallachia were placed, in 1774, under the suzerainty of Turkey. In 1861 the two principalities decided to unite under the name of Roumania, in accordance with an agreement reached by the powers following the Crimean War. Their autonomy guaranteed, the Roumanians selected an Army officer, Colonel Alexander Cuza, as their prince, who thereupon came into power under the title of Alexander John I, Prince of Roumania.

"In 1866, the ruling element in Bucharest decided that they wanted a change, so they politely invaded the prince's bedroom one night, gave him a certificate of abdication to sign and announced that there was a carriage waiting which would convey him to the station, where he was to take the night express for Paris. He obeyed and disappeared forever from public gaze.

"Thereafter, a provisional government elected the Count of Flanders, brother to the late King Leopold of Belgium. But Austria and the other Powers protested so vigorously that the act was reconsidered and Prince Charles called, as previously stated. When Carol assumed the throne it became one of his principal aims to free his country from the suzerainty of Turkey. When the conflict between Russia and Turkey was impending in 1875, he first attempted to have the powers guarantee the neutrality of Roumania during the war, but they were too busy with their own affairs and his efforts failed.

"Then Roumania decided to enter an agreement with Russia. This agreement, which is illuminating, in the light of present-day history, granted free passage of Russian troops over Roumanian soil, Russia undertaking to respect the political rights and to defend the integrity of Roumania.

"One of the first acts of Roumania after hostilities began was to declare her independence of Turkey. As the war proceeded, Russia found herself in sore need of help. Repeated appeals finally brought Roumanian participation and Prince Carol was given the supreme command of the allied forces before Plevna, where he gained a great but costly victory. When the war ended and Turkey and Russia entered into the Treaty of San Stefano, it did recognize Roumanian independence, although Roumania was not admitted to the peace conference. But it also provided that Roumania should get the swampy country between the Danube, where it flows north and the Black Sea. On the other hand, Russia was to have Bessarabia, territory which Roumania claimed and a part of which she had occupied.

"Roumania stood firm against the idea of giving up the beautiful Bessarabia in exchange for the unattractive Dobrudja. Russia, thereupon threatened to disarm the Roumanian army, to which Prince Carol responded that Russia might destroy his army, but that it could not be disarmed.

"The Congress of Berlin, which overturned the Russo-Turkish treaty of San Stefano, did not interfere with Russia's determination to force Roumania to accept Dobrudja in exchange for Bessarabia and Roumania came out with less than she had when she went in. All she could do was to console herself with Lord Beaconsfield's remark to her that "In politics the best services are often rewarded with ingratitude."

In Other Days.

Twenty-five Years Ago.

From The Oregonian December 21, 1891.

Washington, Dec. 20.—Senator Preston B. Plumb, of Kansas, died here of apoplexy today.

Seattle, Dec. 20.—A romantic courtship of two young people from Tacoma came to a successful stage today when Herbert Bashford and Miss Kinnie Cole were married. Mr. Bashford is a poet.

McKee Rankin, who is playing "The Canuck" at French's Park Theater, is at the Portland. Miss Amelia Bingham is in the cast.

Sarah Ann Palmer, widow of the late Joel Palmer, died at Dayton, in Yamhill County, a few days ago.

May Irwin, Otis Harlan and Ignacio Martinetti are among the stars in "Boys and Girls" at the Marquam Grand Theater.

Alfred Stricklin, of Barlow's Gate, recently rode from his home to Dufur, a distance of 30 miles, in three hours without change of horses, to get Dr. Whitcomb to attend his mother, who was taken suddenly ill.

Half a Century Ago.

From The Oregonian December 21, 1866.

Stern & Hess have issued announcements of the opening of their large commercial home, the Nucleus, at Market and Third streets.

L. C. Henrichsen, who has been in the employ of Jacob Cohen for four years, will continue the jewelry business on the withdrawal of Mr. Cohen.

The proceedings of the Idaho Legislature show that there are several "jokingers" in the House. When a chaplain was to be elected Messrs. Abbott and Stafford voted for Henry Ward Beecher and Mr. Munroe for Governor Brownlow.

Mount Jefferson, jealous of Mount Hood, has taken to smoking.

Mr. Fechheimer has been appointed to the vacancy in the Common Council's standing committee due to Mr. Bennett's resignation.

Change in Lifesaving Service.

SODAVILLE, Or., Dec. 19.—(To the Editor.)—Please inform me why the lifesaving service has been placed under the Secretary of the Treasury.

ELMER W. LEVIS.

The service was placed under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury in order to consolidate it with the revenue cutter service, which already is called upon frequently to do lifesaving work. Administrative economy was one of the reasons advanced for the change. It also is contended that uniform conditions of enlistment make the service more attractive and enables it to secure the men it needs.

Work on Alaskan Railroad.

INDEPENDENCE, Or., Dec. 13.—(To the Editor.)—Where is the employment agency for the Government railroad in Alaska?

M. HUBER.

Address Alaskan Railroad Commission, L. C. Smith Building, Seattle, Wash.