

## STRANGE STORY OF CRUELTY DISCLOSED

John Spencer's Family for 28  
Years Abused.

### PROBE BRINGS OUT FACTS

Attempt to Commit Suicide Results  
in Inquiry and Commitment  
to Hospital.

A story of 28 years of cruelty to- ward his family, which manifested itself in a mania for beating his wife and little children, was unfolded yesterday in the investigation of John Spencer, 65, who tried to hang himself Thursday. He was adjudged insane yesterday by three psychiatrists and will be taken to Salem today.

Spencer was saved from death Thursday when his 12-year-old son Fred cut the rope by which he was hanging before he strangled to death. It was this incident which brought the matter to the attention of the Oregon Humane society, which started an investigation at once and had the case cleared up by last night, when Judge Taxwell signed the order committing the man to the state hospital at Salem.

**Little Boy's Jaw Broken.**  
Testimony of the children and the mother brought out the fact that Spencer was subject to violent attacks in which he is said to have beaten his children. The children said yesterday that two years ago he broke the jaw of little Fred, the youngest boy, with a hoe handle. The boy's jaw is still crooked and will be treated by a physician at once, said Mrs. F. W. Swanton, secretary of the humane society.

The children whom the father is said to have mistreated are faithful pupils who never cause any trouble, according to Principal Dickson of the Oakley Green school, which they attend.

The youngest girl, Tena, aged 10, was severely beaten at times by her father, according to testimony of the family, and went to school with her face badly discolored from bruises.

**Truth Hard to Get.**  
"The truth of the matter was very hard to get because the children would not speak before their father of any of his actions," said Mrs. Swanton last night. "We learned that they were so afraid of him that they would not say anything against him."

"It was only when he had been taken to the county jail and they felt that he could not get at them, that they told what we have found to be the truth. Their story was a heart-breaking one."

"It is almost unbelievable that a family could have lived so long under such conditions. The mother, who is about 45, looks 20 years older than that. There is a strange look of abject fear in her face."

**Daughter Leaves Home.**  
The father beat the children severely at times when they had done something to displease him and at times for no reason at all, the investigation showed. At one time several months ago he beat his 14-year-old daughter, Ruth, for the presence of friends. It was then that she left home and went to work.

The Spencers moved here with the mother and three children last June. Before that time they lived in the middle west. The older children have not been living at home for some time.

Statements made yesterday tended to show that Spencer had been struck on the head with a hammer about 25 years ago and that he should have undergone treatment for this long ago.

## CURB ON DISPUTES FOUND

### CADETS TO FIGHT OUT DIFFER- ENCES BEFORE BATTALION.

Students at Louisiana University  
Not Desirous of Taking 'Licking'  
Before Fellow Students.

BATON ROUGE, La., Jan. 21.—(Special.)—All disputes at Louisiana State university between cadets that are so serious they cannot be settled by agreement are to be fought out with light gloves before the entire university battalion. No student is desirous of getting a "licking" before the entire cadet corps of 700 boys, and the plan is expected to check differences.

Recently Commandant Smith learned that two cadets were planning to go to the old battle grounds between the "B" building and settle a row. They were Willard White, sophomore, of Seachuck and E. Embree, a freshman, of Slaughter.

When the battalion was out for drill Colonel Smith asked the two boys to step out and settle their troubles before the entire corps. He formed the battalion in a hollow square and let them fight it out to the fifth round, when White sent Embree to the mat.

**PAY CUT ACTION WAITS**  
DEFINITE DECISION DELAYED  
BY BOILERMAKERS.

Attempts to Force Down Wages  
Are Assailed by Speakers.  
Strike Favored by Some.

No definite decision in regard to the wage cut of 5 cents an hour at the Northwest Bridge & Iron company was reached by members of the Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers' union, who held a largely attended mass meeting at their club rooms, Second and Alder streets, last night.

Opinion of the gathering, as evidenced by applause given various speakers, was that if wages are generally cut to such an extent that the unions feel it impossible to accept, the only recourse left the unions is to strike.

An appeal for greater solidarity on the part of laboring men was voiced and urgent request was made by Joe Reed, international organizer and representative of the union, for those who had not done so to become members of the organization at once.

That the Northwest Bridge & Iron company refused to treat with a committee appointed by the Metal Trades Council and instead said a conference

## WOMAN'S CLUB IN PLAY

Entertainment Has 100 or More  
Talented Portland Children.  
Sum to Be Announced Later.

### PROCEEDS TO BE APPLIED TO BUILDING FUND.

The Portland Woman's club sponsored an entertainment last night at Lincoln high school in which a hundred or more talented Portland children participated. The proceeds will be applied toward the building fund and the sum raised will be announced later by the finance committee.

Miss Belle Williams, a retired professional theatrical woman who arrived recently from Los Angeles to make her home in Portland, conducted the program. Some of her own pupils and pupils of Alta E. Travis, Elvora Fleck, Mrs. Babbidge and Dorothy Rasmussen took part. Groups of Boy Scouts under direction of Mr. Goss contributed a smart drill, and the Whitney Boys' chorus was heard in a group of interesting vocal numbers.

The first half of the program was given over to recitations, solos and dance specialties, in which the following children participated: Elvora Peterson, Eva Pittman, Donald Confrey, Deloris Laudart, Margaret Getty, Donald Confrey, Caroline Whitney, Lola Whitton, Marion Levitt, Ruth Lewis, Master Norman Wiley, Betty Jahn, Buckner and Kathryn Mildred Berg.

The second half of the program was a variety of songs, "Father Time," in which the 12 months were represented in attractive dance or song specialties appropriate for each month.

January, Loretta May Reeves, in a dance; February, Caroline Whitney and Bessie Carr as Martha and George Washington; March, Donald Confrey and Marion Levitt in a St. Patrick's day specialty; April, an effective lily dance by June Murtin; May, a bird dance by Norma Beach, and for June a miniature wedding in which the following participated: Betty Jahn, Buckner, Norman Wiley, June Tenyson, Yvonne Grunshaw, Thompson Himes and Grisham Kenward.

For July the Boy Scouts represented July Fourth in drill, and August had its specialty, enacted by Deloris Laudart and chorus consisting of Elvora Peterson, Anna Horne, and Pauline Oreck. September was "School Days" by Ada Francis Perrell and Thompson Himes. For October, "Pick-Your-Own" Georgia and chorus, and Dorothy Silk. Helen Fickler, Vuelia Young, Norma Bowler, Margaret Probstel, November, David Confrey and chorus consisting of Blanche Lewis, Anna Lewis, Doris Cox, June Tenyson. December, "Angel," enacted by Margaret Getty, assisted by Whitney quartet and soloist.

The four seasons were represented picturesquely by Flora Bartemas, Verna Webster and Louise Schneider as Winter; Althea Dwyer, Audrey Winkler and Constance Roth as Spring; Shannah Helser, Alberta McConnell and Pauline Blew as Summer; and Mabel Dunlap, Helen Simmons and Carolyn Miller as Autumn. Donald Confrey played old Father Time and Gretchen Hilcher was the Little New Year.

**WOULD-BE HERO IS HELD**  
Husband Charged With Arson So  
He Could Rescue Estranged Wife.

OMAHA, Jan. 21.—Thomas W. Wilson, 34, automobile mechanic, confessed, according to detectives, that he set fire to his father-in-law's home today in the hope that he might bring about a reconciliation with his wife by saving her and her two small children from the burning house. It was then that she left home and went to work.

"I thought if the house caught fire I could go back and help her and the children," Wilson said. "Then we would go back together again."

Wilson did not make the rescue. Firemen reached the scene so promptly the rescue was not necessary. Only slight property damage was done. Wilson was charged with arson.

**YOUNG WOMAN SENTENCED**  
\$5909 Fine and Prison Term Im-  
posed on Embzeiler.

HELENA, Mont., Jan. 21.—Miss Ruth Kane, former assistant postmaster at East Helena, pleaded guilty in United States district court here today to a charge of embezzlement of postal funds. She was fined \$5909.85 and sentenced to serve 15 months in the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kan.

An indefinite stay of execution was granted to permit her to seek a pardon from the president. The money declared to have been embezzled about the amount of the fine, has been replaced, it was said, Miss Kane is 25 years of age.

**FALL IN FIGHT FATAL**  
Spokane Man Drops Down Stair-  
way Shaft at Vancouver, B. C.

VANCOUVER, B. C., Jan. 21.—Roy Cunningham, 38, railroad conductor of Spokane, Wash., was killed instantly by a fall from the fifth floor down the stairway shaft of the Empress hotel here tonight.

Harry Robinson, 45, steamboat captain of Vancouver, who fell with him, escaped serious injury. According to the police, the men had been drinking and were fighting when they fell. Captain Robinson and George Williams, 39, a trainman of Spokane, were arrested.

**MASCUINE SCRIBE PICKED**  
Woman Lawmaker Offends Suf-  
fragettes of Oklahoma.

MUSKOGEE, Okla., Jan. 21.—Surprise and some indignation was expressed among suffragettes here today when it became known that a man instead of a woman would be private secretary to Miss Alice Robinson, who next March will become the nation's only woman member of congress.

Miss Robinson said she had tendered the appointment to Assistant Postmaster Cook, who served under her when she was postmistress of Muskogee. She declined and she appointed his brother, Benjamin Cook.

**ISLAND OFFICIAL OUSTED**  
Philippine Assistant Attorney-Gen-  
eral Loses Job.

MANILA, Jan. 21.—Felicio R. F. de la Cruz, assistant attorney-general for the Philippines, was dismissed today by Governor-General Francis Burton Harrison.

Harrison, in the prosecution of election fraud cases was charged.

**ROAD MEETING PLANNED**  
Linn County Association to Hold  
Annual Assembly February 5.

LEBANY, Or., Jan. 21.—(Special.)—Two members of the state highway

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Accompanied by his counsel, Mr. Hough arrived in the presiding judge's court promptly at the time set for the hearing. Hough was dressed in the height of fashion, having made a complete change since his release on Wednesday and wearing a storm overcoat and a new felt hat. His 48 hours of freedom on bond seemed to have made a great change in him, for his cheeks appeared full of color and he was not as nervous as on the day when he was arraigned.

Rumors that Mrs. Ruth Millholland, widow of John B. Millholland, senior partner of the bond house, who committed suicide the day that Hough was alleged to have confessed to embezzlement, will be brought to Spokane to testify in the Hough case were heard about the court house this afternoon. James F. Callahan, millionaire mining man of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, who was swindled out of approximately \$400,000, will be summoned as a witness. Officials of the steel irrigation district of Oregon, of the Ladd & Tilton bank of Portland, of Overbeck & Cooke brokerage house of Portland, of the Federal National bank of Spokane, of the Exchange National bank of Spokane, and numerous stock and bond brokers of Spokane, Portland, Seattle, Salt Lake, Helena, Butte, Denver and San Francisco also will be called to testify.

**Trunk Hides Still.**  
Information said to have been given by a chambermaid, that a downtown hotel late last night led to the seizure of the bottom of an improved moonshine still, which was contained in a suspiciously appearing trunk belonging to one of the lodgers. The tenant of the room in which the trunk and still were found is said to have told officers that the still is the property of an eastern bootlegger, now living at Chehalis. It is said that the liquor vendor intended soon to come to Portland and establish himself.

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