Sunday Oregonian

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THE ORIGIN OF LIFE.

The dispatches from Toronto containing the account of a famous English biologist's declaration that scientists no longer are willing to accept Darwin's conception of the origin of life have been too brief to give us an adequate measure of the grounds on which he bases his conclusion, but we need no help to interpret the universal interest that the subject holds for reasoning men. Ever since a very long time ago, when it was commonly believed that man came into being by having life breathed into his nostrils, thus converting his inanimate body into a thing with a soul, the problem which Darwin only crystallized into a formula but which the savants of the ages had found a fruitful theme for speculation has profoundly interested the curious. Now, it appears, Professor Bateson has left us without even a theory to comfort us. "Obscurantism," as he calls it, implies such a confession as well might have been made centuries ago.

Thinking man, nevertheless, was born for speculation, and we may well suppose that Professor Bateson himself would not discourage further investigation. Science has derived a good deal from its researches into the origin of life, though it may be as much in the dark as ever upon the main subject of its quest. We recognize that it is as futile as it is idle to indulge in mere guesswork, but systematic inquiry continues. It is not too much to hope, for example, that the chemistry of the protoplasm will some day be advanced sufficiently to furnish us with a working hypothesis, or that we shall learn the reason why, though the known chemical elements of the lower orders of life are abundant and though the physical conditions necessary for their development can be regulated, we are still unable to determine the precise difference between the living and the dead. Recent experiments in this field have not been wholly discouraging. It is something to have produced growth artificially and to have prolonged the life of organs detached from their original hosts, as scientists already have done.

The early theories were but fantastic speculations, yet out of them something tangible may emerge. The idea of our extra-terrestrial origin may well be held in abeyance until the sciences of greater precision overtake biology. Astronomy with its corelated ologies may conceivably take us back to the point where men supposed that life was conveyed to our planet in the form of cosmic dust or upon meteorites thrown off other stars. It is yet remembered that Kelvin and Von Helmholtz, laboring independently, stressed the presence of hydrocarbons in meteoric bodies and their indicated existence in the spectra of the tails of comets, and that Arrahenius, the Swedish physicist, held the idea that life is universally diffused and is constantly emitted from all habitable worlds by spores which traverse space for ages, the vast majority being destroyed but a few finding resting places on bodies that have reached the habitable state. Darwin himself sought to abolish the conception of life as an entity, postulating that "living" matter was but the exceptionally complicated development of chemical and physical properties recognized in evolution. This it was that drew the fire of hostile critics upon Darwin's devoted head, but the service which Darwin performed as a stimulator of orderly investigation is still the conspicuous achievement of his memorable life.

We now interpret a miracle merely as an occurrence outside the pale of our understanding, but do not cease to seek the reason for it on that account. The relationship between the organic and the inorganic is somewhat better understood than it was a few years ago. Chemists know that they can not only produce alcohol by fermentation, which corresponds to organic method, but that they can also synthesize it, as from limestone, coal and water. Thus a bridge from the inorganic to the organic is constructed, the importance of which it is impossible to appraise now. The progress that we have made in the new chemistry may be pregnant with meaning for those who are to follow in the paths of the investigators of the present day. While the spirit of inquiry persists hope beckons. The "obscurantism" of the scientist is no more a call to pessimism than it is a challenge to carry on.

We are handicapped at the outset by the difficulty of defining life. Spencer's suggestion that it is "the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external conditions" is not satisfying, nor is the generalization that "life is the element associated with matter which distinguished the living from that which is not alive," but we need not because of that despair. The term "vital force" is a thread binding all of the phenomena of being and of motion and of change which we do not comprehend, and for the present is as good as any other. Yet men, having framed a new definition of miracle, look forward with increasing confidence to the discovery of the meaning of life, and finally of the nature of life itself. It is the one subject concerning which human curiosity is insatiable, the one problem which, unless it is sooner solved, will engage the attention of investigators until the end of time.

No one, we think, would receive with more cordial hospitality the criticisms now leveled at his theories than Darwin himself if he were alive today. He was not dogmatic, he asserted no original claim on any theory, he formed his judgments in the light of knowledge which he knew would be added to as time went on. Tentative though they were, his conclusions formed the working basis of the biology which we now know, and which also expands amazingly as one investigator after another turns on the light. Moreover, Professor Bateson has been careful to say that Darwin's theory of evolution is in no sense disturbed in principle, though it, too, may be modified by new discoveries. The important fact about Darwin is that he was a profound thinker and a great investigator, and that, whether all he believed was true or not, he did more than any other man of his time to organize and give direction to the spirit of scientific curiosity for which above all others the nineteenth century is famed.

THE "WONDER CHILD" FINDS A MATE.

The wedding of Winifred Sackville Stoner Jr. to a Frenchman named Charles Philippe de Bruche, which has just become known, although it took place several months ago, will cause more than a ripple of interest among the intellectually elect. It will be remembered that Winifred was a "wonder child" only a few years ago. A further fact of interest about her is that she is the youngest person ever to receive recognition in "Who's Who," in which the following description of her attainments appears:

Born, Norfolk, Va., August 19, 1902; educated at home, through travel, attending lectures in universities and by reading extensively in libraries. Has made impromptu speeches in public since age of 4; has traveled throughout United States demonstrating "What Is Natural Education." Episcopalian. Author: (Here follows a list of more than a dozen books, including "Mother Goose in Esperanto," published when Winifred was only 8.)

A hobby of Winifred's parents was "natural education." That they wholly succeeded by the natural method will appear from an interview with the young woman printed soon after the news of her marriage became known. "We found," she said, in explanation of her new romance, "that we shared each other's interests on every vital point. We are lingulsts—I speak twelve languages and Charles speaks seventeen. My husband and I both love the same poetry and the same writers of history and science." But the real value of the natural method of education appears in the following: "More important still," she told the interviewer, "I love him, and that is all that matters."

The Stoner method is all right. It gets results. The real reason why normal young people wed is neither affinity in languages nor liking for the same brand of poetry. It is comprehended in the final sentence, in words that any girl or boy can understand.

DIVINING RODS.

The Arizona college professor who reports that he has invented a device for detecting the presence of minerals under the surface of the ground imposes no tax on scientific credulity, as did the hazel-wand necromancers who used to go about the country "locating" veins of ore and underground watercourses by means of a magic switch. The news dispatch from Tucson is wanting in particulars, but it permits the inference that some of the well-known principles governing magnetic affinities may have been employed. Certain metals are better conductors of electricity than are others, and we know more about electrical currents than we formerly did, so that it is reasonable to suppose that an intelligent and systematic experimenter may have turned this knowledge to account. Perfection during the war of a submarine detector, which has since been adapted to the guidance of ships through harbor shoals, is quite likely to have furnished the inspiration for the new prospecting invention.

The divining rod had a different status. Every westerner is familiar with the claims of so-called diviners, who, employing a simple forked stick, the tip or joint of which was supposed to incline downward whenever it reached a position perpendicularly over a deposit of mineral or body of water, at one time reaped a harvest in every region where minerals and water were the chief objects of the people's desire. But those who believed in these claims need have no shame for their gullibility, since no less august a body than a German society for the study of divination solemnly asserted shortly before the war that the value of the instrument had been scientifically established, even to the extent of locating unseen deposits of potash. This body held, however, that the success of the system was not dependent on physical laws, but on psychical relationships which are not yet understood. In other words, merit lay in the person employing the device and not in the divining rod itself.

An "abnormal psychological condition in the diviner, analogous to clairvoyancy," as it is described by one writer, will not mean much to the average man, but it may explain the undoubted sincerity of many so-called diviners. Modern science long ago repudiated any connection between the divining rod and water or metal, but at least one eminent British scientist has satisfied himself that the rod may turn or twist without any voluntary deception on the part of the user, the phenomenon being accounted for by a reflex action excited by some stimulus on the mind, which may be either a subconscious suggestion or an actual impression. But here the confusion of impressions is likely to result in fallacious conclusions, and self-deception on the part of the diviner is no more satisfying than failure of any other kind.

True science rejects clairvoyance in matters of this kind, and statisticians have evidence that divining rods do not usually divine. Like the rainmakers, the diviners have a certain percentage of chance in their favor, and it is curiously true that the hazel switch has not been proved to be more accurate than mere guess-work. But the Arizona method, if it is founded on sound principles of physics, may conceivably revolutionize prospecting throughout the world.

A genuine want is filled by John Anderson through his system of supplying healthful reading matter to the logging camps and sawmills of the northwest. In many cases it was only for lack of anything better that workmen in the lumber industry read the seditious literature which the I. W. W. and other disloyal organizations circulated most industriously among them. One effective antidote is to provide a substitute, which Mr. Anderson does. He also travels among the camps and mills delivering addresses, both religious and patriotic, to men who were for too long a period sought out only by radical agitators who preached discontent, contempt of law and destruction of property. Lumbermen who know Mr. Anderson's work highly approve it, and for the general good it should have general support.

IN THE INTEREST OF ACCURACY.

There is a better chance that the truth will overtake the lie than there used to be, as is again shown by the British war office's denial that the destruction of the Hampshire, resulting in the death of Lord Kitchener, was due to the machinations of a German woman spy, who obtained her information from a British officer. It now appears that the woman in question was securely locked in a British prison cell during the entire period in which preparations for Kitchener's journey to Russia were being made, and that owing to certain changes in the schedule made at the last moment before sailing she could not have known enough to have aided the enemy even if she had been free.

The story nevertheless is easily accounted for. After she had been released, no evidence having been discovered which would implicate her in any overt act, she returned to Germany, where, to ingratiate herself with the patriots of the fatherland, she circulated the account which until only recently has passed for history. It now seems that she was not a heroine, but only a self-seeking fabricator, and that the British authorities erred only in releasing her from captivity too soon.

A fact of dominating interest is that the stigma has been removed from the British officer who was accused, not of intentional perfidy, but of weakness which in time of war would have been as disastrous in its effects.

TWO GOLDEN DECADES.

The first debates in congress on the subject of opening the way to the settlement of the Oregon country, of which this year marks the centenary, may be viewed without violence to our sense of historical proportion as the most significant happenings of the kind in many centuries. They were precipitated by the introduction of Dr. John Floyd's second bill to promote the development of the west. Floyd, who was a representative from Virginia, did not have the satisfaction of seeing his pet measure passed; it was defeated, indeed, by the decisive vote of 100 to 61; but those who now cherish his memory know that nothing that has come to pass in a hundred years has so fully justified the reputation of any prophet. Within a decade after Floyd began his fight another important event occurred—the establishment of steam navigation on the Missouri river—and the great invasion of the west, which was soon to extend to the Pacific coast, followed almost immediately afterward. In about another decade the missionary movement was under way; west, northwest and southwest, the whole of the vast region from the Rio Grande and the Red river to the parallel of forty-nine north and from the Rocky mountains to the ocean, was won by English-speaking Americans within an inconceivably short time.

The twenty years between 1830 and 1850, which were the most momentous in the consequences of the social phenomena which characterized them, were also without parallel in the history of any continent. The irruption of the Asiatics into Europe only is comparable with the movement which here set in during the first half of the nineteenth century, and the Tartar overflow lacked the essential qualities of spontaneity, celerity and completeness which marked the winning of the west by peace-loving peoples of Anglo-Saxon stock. Even in our own country the hegira was without precedent. It had taken two centuries, as Seymour Dunbar points out in his "History of Travel in America," for the pioneers of Virginia and New England to reach the Mississippi river; they covered the great space between the Mississippi and the Pacific in the two decades after that. They "added to the domain and settled a quarter of a million square miles in the Oregon country, took about 600,000 square miles of western and southwestern territory from Mexico, got a thousand miles of Pacific coast and overran the intervening region." We read on:

By the close of 1850 the extraordinary outburst—requiring so few words for its definition, but which was so profound in its effect upon the whole world—was complete and irrevocable. The things that followed, including the continuation of the outward movement then in progress, were consequences of what had already happened. Not far from 2,000,000 square miles of territory were penetrated and occupied as a direct or indirect result of the hegira that took place in America between 1840 and 1850. Both the travel movement in question and the earth's area affected by it were, in respect of size, the most extensive and largest involved of any similar phenomenon within a like interval of recorded history.

This was a golden decade in a literal as well as a figurative sense. It influenced not alone the destiny of America but that of the civilized world. By its enormous addition to the stock of gold it created a new buying power which stimulated the industries of every continent on the globe and vastly accelerated commercial expansion and development. The United States, acquiring an important outlet to the Pacific, blossomed as if overnight into a world power. Immigration from other lands, and with it our present "melting pot" problem, virtually dates from that time. Emigration to America profoundly affected Europe; our access to the western coast was eventually to result in amazing changes in Asia; the hermit nations emerged from their cells of solitude; trade flourished; the former luxuries of the rich became the necessities of all the people; new senses of social values were created. People setting out from the east said that they were going to Oregon and California, and so they were; "but beside them strode consequences that were going further still." The imponderables of the beginning were the more momentous in the end.

It is a task for the psychologist no less than for the historian to appraise the motives which actuated the principals in these events and to set them in their proper relationships. Conflicting emotions inspired the greatest drift of population the world has ever known. On the one hand the desire for greater freedom—even though purchased at the price of solitude; on the other a new manifestation of the gregarious spirit common to normal men. A mass complex which even now we cannot analyze operated to people a wilderness, revise the geography of a continent, and set all our social preconceptions at naught. A quaint reminder of the spirit that actuated a small minority of those who helped to beat the frontier back is found in the words of that sturdy old backwoodsman, Daniel Boone, who said in 1813:

I first removed to the woods of Kentucky. I fought and repelled the savages, and hoped for repose. Game was abundant and our path was prosperous, but soon I was molested by interlopers from every quarter. Again I retreated to the region of the Mississippi; but again the speculators and settlers followed me. Once more I withdrew to the licks of Missouri—and here at length I hoped to find rest. But I was still pursued—for I had not been two years at the licks before a damned Yankee came and settled down within a hundred miles of me.

The colossal mass, representing in an aggregate that which Boone symbolized in the individual, were stirred by reasons which it is probable they themselves did not understand, and which they could not have reduced to an epigram if they had understood them. They constituted together with the Boones and their kind the most amazing manifestation of individual aspirations working in unison to a common end of which there is any inkling in the history of the ages.

TUMULTY ON WILSON.

The case for Woodrow Wilson as president has now been laid before the American people by Joseph P. Tumulty, who as his private secretary was his closest associate and most devoted supporter. Whatever opinion we may form on the merits of the case, reading of Tumulty's work leaves no room for doubt that Wilson was his hero, who had his unstinted admiration and his single-hearted devotion. In a sense he was Wilson's Boswell, but he was much less and much more. Though Boswell was a toady to Johnson, he was so faithful as a diarist that he recorded all his sage's words and acts whether they reflected well or ill on his subject, and he made Johnson famous. Tumulty shows no sign of the toady; he is a loyal coworker, endowed with much political sagacity, one whose advice was often sought, not resented when volunteered, and sometimes followed, though appropriated as Wilson's own ideas, as was the Wilson way. But Tumulty is a hero-worshiper, and his hero looms so large before his mental vision that he cannot see in their true light his hero's acts nor the events in which Wilson played a leading part, nor can he judge fairly the acts of those who opposed Wilson.

Nevertheless the book has intense interest as a review of Wilson's public career by his most ardent champion and by the man who has most intimate knowledge of his public acts, his policy, his motives and his character. It is a most valuable contribution to contemporary history. The Oregonian has been reproached for permitting a biased and partisan review of the Wilson public service to be set forth in its columns; but it performed what it conceives to be a clear journalistic duty in printing the Wilson record from the Wilson point of view. It was frankly the Wilson story, and the telling of it was committed to the man who by his position and relationship had earned the right to speak.

Gravest among the many criticisms of Wilson's course as president are the charges of intense partisanship under circumstances which demanded subordination of party to the common purpose for which both parties should work together, and egotism which made him impatient of advice that did not agree with his own ideas and which led him to assume dictatorial power in defiance of popular rebuke. In the effort to vindicate him from these charges, Tumulty adds supporting testimony for them. He cites with censure partisan opposition from the republicans which was provoked by Wilson's rejection of any suggestion that came or seemed to come from the opposite party and by his tenacity in keeping executive control of the government in time of war in the hands of himself and those democrats who bowed to his will. Naturally partisanship on Wilson's side stimulated the same vice among his opponents, but in the eyes of the worshiping Tumulty it was a virtue in Wilson.

These defects in Wilson's character and policy showed throughout his administration, and they wrecked the work which he intended to make his greatest achievement — placing the United States at the head of a league of nations. Contrary to a very common opinion, Tumulty reveals that as early as April, 1911, Wilson foresaw the war and hesitated to seek the democratic nomination because he doubted whether he would be a good war president. Almost from the outbreak of the war he realized that all that America stands for was at stake and should align the United States with the allies, but the stronger became the demand that we fight after Germany had given direct provocation the more determined he became in preserving neutrality.

Because Roosevelt, Wood and other prominent republicans led the preparedness agitation, he regarded it as a partisan scheme of his political foes to force his hand. He had admitted the need of preparation by instructions to the secretaries of war and navy as early as July, 1915; in the following December he approved Garrison's continental army scheme, which was designed to prepare the public mind for the draft; he admitted that voluntary service would not meet the impending emergency. Yet at the first breath of opposition in the house, he turned against Garrison's plan. He made some speeches for preparedness after much urging, but said not a word for the plan which he had endorsed, remarking that he was ready to accept an alternative, though the occasion demanded such forceful advocacy of a single well thought out plan, as Roosevelt would have given. When Garrison resigned and joined the preparedness forces, he was considered to have gone over to the enemy. In 1916 Wilson made no fight for genuine war preparation, but accepted whatever congress did. The natural explanation is aversion to following the initiative of political opponents.

The same mental bent showed after our declaration of war. In magnitude the war was evidently to surpass all others in our history and was destined to demand all the energies of all our people, statesmen as well as all others. The policy on which it was conducted and the terms on which it was closed would not only occupy the best brains of both parties, but would give a turn to our foreign policy for many years, whichever party should be in power. To a mind not obsessed with partisanship, the occasion demanded that both parties join in both war and peace councils in order that the nation might act as a unit, then and in future foreign relations. With that end in mind the allies formed coalitions and won by them, though Tumulty's memory fails him on this point. But Wilson hotly resented the suggestion, and Tumulty considers that he made adequate use of republicans when he assigned them to subordinate positions, where they had no voice in shaping policy or directing the war. To his mind it was a democratic war, in which republicans must help where he assigned them and without discussion vote "aye" to all his decisions.

Even before victory had turned to the side of the allies Tumulty urged him to ask for a democratic congress that he might make a democratic peace. Hence came the fateful letter of October 24, 1918, when peace was evidently near, in which Wilson said the republicans were "pro-war but anti-administration." He said they had sought "to take the choice of policy and conduct of the war" out of his hands, when in fact they had sought to share with his party the work and the responsibility. Tumulty defends this act of partisanship by citing republican appeals for election of a republican congress, when this was simply the reaction to Wilson's own entire course. He names as precedents Lincoln's appeal in 1864 and McKinley's in 1898, though these are no precedents for the situation in 1918. Lincoln was opposed by McClellan, who ran on a platform denouncing the civil war as a failure, though he repudiated it, and that meant abandonment of the union. McKinley asked for a republican congress after the democratic members had united almost to a man against Spanish war bonds and had threatened to read out of their party the few dissentients. During the world war the republicans never refused the administration anything and only urged its more vigorous prosecution. The sole ground of Wilson's appeal was his desire to keep affairs in his own hands as leader of a very tame democratic party.

After the mandate for which he had asked was denied him, Wilson went on as though it had been given. He consulted only his few familiars, whom Tumulty names, about peace delegates, and though Root, Taft and one of the supreme judges were proposed, he turned them all down. He took the strong sentiment in favor of some kind of a league of nations as approval in advance for any league that he might form at Paris. He ignored the warning conveyed in the senate's round robin, slipped into the covenant in weak form some of the amendments proposed by Root, Hughes and Taft, and returned with a demand that his perfect work should be ratified without change. When the senate, as the co-ordinate branch of the treaty-making power, sought to take part in the work by adopting reservations, he called them nullification and would have none of them. To him his league was the only possible league, and reservations would put us outside the concert of powers. How far astray he went was shown by the discussion of the reservations by Lord Grey and the Paris Temps, plainly indicating that the allies would accept them.

The adulatory Tumulty describes his tour of the country on a last appeal to the people as that of a battle-worn "grim warrior," driven by the great idea of a crusader to fight to the death. To impartial minds it will appear rather as a final display of obstinacy on the part of one who was so infatuated with his own work that he expected all to deem it holy, one whose mind was so narrowly partisan that he could see only evil motives among critical opponents. His course recalls to mind these lines of Goldsmith on Edmund Burke:

Who, born for the universe, narrowed his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind.

For we must accord to Wilson credit for great qualities of mind and character, and a noble purpose to benefit mankind while building his own fame. His oratory could sway a crowd, and his personal charm could win the love of individuals, though he was commonly held cold because he was not a "mixer." The pity of it is that he failed to see how acceptance of cooperation would have disarmed the partisanship of his opponents, would probably have won success where he failed, would thus have served the cause he had at heart and would have brightened his fame though he shared it with others.

A LIFE SACRIFICED TO SCIENCE.

The death at Vera Cruz of Dr. Walter B. Cross, a scientist of the Rockefeller Institute engaged in researches into the occurrence of yellow fever in Mexico, provokes reminiscences of the long fight waged to master this peculiarly destructive malady. It recalls also the death about twenty years ago of a member of the staff of Dr. Walter Reed, Dr. J. Y. Lazear, who permitted himself to be bitten by infected mosquitos in order to establish Dr. Reed's theory of the nature of the communicability of the disease. A co-worker of Reed and Lazear, Dr. James Carroll, also exposed himself to the bites of the germ-carrying insects and contracted the fever, but recovered. The very brief period that has elapsed since then is the measure of the rapidity with which science has moved to eliminate a dreaded scourge.

Yellow fever is properly classified among the maladies that infest the tropics and that until recently have made them practically uninhabitable by white men, but its horizon has extended far beyond the tropics. In 1793, when our republic was still young and public health systems unorganized, there was a yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia, then a town of some 40,000 inhabitants, in which more than 4000 persons, or more than 10 per cent, died. The fever reached New York in 1798 and more than 2100 died. The southern states, owing to their proximity to the West Indies, from which epidemics were borne on the wind, long had their regularly recurring fever seasons, with terrible mortality. In 1878 no fewer than 132 cities and towns south of Mason and Dixon's line suffered, with some 75,000 cases and more than 20,000 deaths, an event still remembered for the widespread impairment of morale which it caused as well as for its high death rate.

Yellow fever was indeed the world's most deadly plague when an American commission began its researches soon after the Spanish war in an effort to make conditions better for our army of occupation in Cuba. It was during this investigation that Dr. Reed, whose work has been commemorated by a great hospital in Washington, established the association of the mosquito stegomyia fasciata with the spread of the fever from man to man.

The fact of greatest interest, next to the nature of the disease itself, which was established by scientists working in this connection, was the community aspect of preventive efforts. When the Rockefeller Institute some time ago sent the Japanese physician Noguchi to western South America to help the people banish the fever, it concentrated its efforts upon educating local governments to the necessity for organized action, and Dr. Cross was on a similar mission to Mexico when he died. It has been proved in the United States, however, that where health authorities are vigilant epidemics can be almost eliminated, for there has been no recurrence of moment in this country since the return of the United States commission from Cuba in 1901. The result, too, has been the virtual stamping out of the fever from the age-old centers of infection like Havana and Rio de Janeiro, only a short time ago among the plague spots of the world.

Typhoid and yellow fever are intimately associated in the history of epidemiology by the circumstance that Dr. Reed's first inquiries into the latter were the by-product of efforts to reduce the incidence of the former in our military camps, and the amazing results which have been obtained in controlling typhoid are even more indicative of what can be done by communal measures. For example, a report recently published by a life insurance statistician shows that in sixty-eight cities of the country in 1920 the mortality rate from this cause was but 3.7 per 100,000 inhabitants, whereas during the civil war period a rate of seventy to eighty deaths per 100,000 was not uncommon in the principal cities of the north. But this was reduced rapidly, so that in the quinquennium between 1905 and 1910 it varied from fifteen to twenty-two per 100,000, and the final triumph comes in 1920, with a rate of 3.7. The rates for some cities are but one-tenth of the rate of ten years ago.

Typhoid, malaria and yellow fever have been removed from the list of hideous maladies within about twenty years and smallpox, in every locality where vigilance has been consistently maintained, has also been reduced almost to zero. It is necessary, nevertheless, that all precautions shall be continued. The sense of false security, as was illustrated by the smallpox outbreak in the region of Kansas City, is most dangerous to health.

A "wet" advocate wants to know "what we do with all the money we save by prohibition." Most any bill collector could answer his question. It is going for a class of goods that doesn't cause headache on the morning after.

John Cowper Powys suggests that every American business man should retire at 50 and devote the rest of his life to pursuing a hobby. Most of them pursue the hobby all right, but they don't need to retire to do it.

The dinosaur recently found in Canada was only thirty feet long, a mere pony dinosaur, as it were. But one cannot help thinking what a commotion he would have created if he had been taken alive.

It seems appropriate that the United States, which suppressed the Barbary coast pirates, should take the lead in moving against their descendants who violate the laws of civilized warfare at sea.

The Harvard astronomers are going to measure the heat of the stars, and by and by, at the rate science is advancing, a way will be found to use it under boilers on earth.

The Chinese have a postoffice system, after six thousand years of getting along without one. They may be slow, but they are sure, over that way.

"Marriage Too Easy," says a newspaper headline. A clear case of want of precision in statement. "Getting Married Too Easy" is obviously what it meant.

The prediction of a French hermit that a great American statesman will die during 1922 ought to cause a million brethren to make their wills.

Emma Goldman's chances for a pardon in all probability have not been enhanced by the recent indiscretions of Debs.

"Mexican Bandits Kill an American," says a headline. Normalcy is spreading across the southern boundary line.

India has 300 poets, but what she needs is a philosophy on which, regardless of caste, all of her people can unite.

One advantage about cold days is that one can use more fuel with feeling that there is an excuse for being extravagant.

Emma Goldman is on the way to a round-up of the herd at Berlin, but finds the going bad.

Judge Deich enters into the spirit of the season by marking down a fine to $9.99.

The trouble with some people seems to be that they think a naval holiday is an excuse for not doing any work.

The trouble in Egypt is about as hard to solve as the famous riddle of the Sphinx.

Seed catalogue time approaches.

The Listening Post.

By DeWitt Harry.

INTEREST in "Main Street" continues unabated, and residents of most cities have studied their localities well. Of course, Portland's "Main Street" is Broadway, or is it Washington street? In any event there are streets in other sections of the city just as important to these districts, miniature "Main Streets" in fact.

What of Burnside street, the "Main Street" of the floater and of the woods worker, the business and entertainment center for that large class of single men who have few ties and live from day to day? Its importance cannot be passed, and it is a street of stores, many restaurants and theaters, all of a class to appeal to this kind of man.

First street as it continues south develops into a series of "Main Streets" for the foreign population, and into a regular Ghetto district near its far end. North there is Thurman street on the west side, with its shows and shops and retail center where the Twenty-third-street car enters.

Then on the east side there are several important streets that contain their own life nearly to themselves. Grand avenue, across the Morrison bridge, is likely the secondary retail district of the city, with its banks and complete service. In Albina there is Russell street and its intersecting streets from the river up, Albina, Williams and Union, all centaining their own business centers and independent of other parts of Portland.

Killingsworth avenue is an important trade center for the peninsula district, and in St. Johns, Lents, Sellwood, Sunnyside, Montavilla and others they have their own retail centers, where the life of the community is found, with improvement and district clubs and all that goes to make up community or small town life. It's really a number of small towns within the one large one. The life that Sinclair Lewis found in his "Main Street" should not be so far off from any one of these small sections of Portland.

* * *

This spirited debate took place during a rest period in a football game in a vacant lot. The opposing teams gathered to breathe and talk, and every word led to another until the boys were going strong. One, with great wealth of description, told of knowing a boy who was deaf, and they started to discuss loss of the senses.

"I'd kinda like to be deaf," started the argument, "'cause then I wouldn't hear you kids jaw and then I couldn't hear my mother call, either."

"Oh, I'd rather not be able to feel anything," was the spright remark of one tad lying in a nice, soft, muddy place. "I couldn't feel a lickin' then and when I'd play football I could just slam you fellows right, and if you'd hit me I'd never know it."

"Aw, shucks, you kids make me tired," from the muddiest one. "You dowanna lose any of them senses. Couldn't hear music nor feel your dog's fur when you pet him. Aw, shucks!"

Then the kid with the black eye and the tough look brought forth the surprise of the debate by developing a strain of poetry. "Yes, and any of you fellows would be sorry if you lost any of your senses. What if you couldn't see, eh? Wouldn't know there was any footballs or anything or any birds or dogs. Or if you couldn't smell, what good would your nose be. Only to blow. And if you couldn't taste, why, then, you better just quit eating. You kids always make me tired; you don't know nothing."

And they resumed their game.

* * *

The fascination of overhearing the chance conversation, all unintentionally, cannot be overestimated. Even though one may not want to appear an eavesdropper, fragments of talk often float to one's ears. From two women who were walking the following drifted back:

"Both legs are disjointed and I don't know what we can do for her," was the startling remark with eloquent gestures.

"Poor thing! How does Mary feel?" asked the companion.

"She's just heartbroken. But if that were all it might be all right. Just think—her head was crushed and she lost most of her hair, too," and the horrible details were categoried. "When we found her she did not have a stitch of clothes on her body, and she had been lying out all night in the snow and cold."

Cudgel our brain as we would, no remembrance came of such a tragedy in the news of several days back, but the intense interest waned when we heard:

"Well, it was the dog's fault. He dragged her outside, and Mary found her the next morning, her complexion all washed away. I went down and got her another doll as nearly like it as I could."

* * *

The passage of human birds of flight brings back recollections of cinders and movement, the free, open life of the migratory man. The box-car passenger, the dare of riding fast passenger trains, the chances of clearing a freight division, all speak the determination to get some place that is better than the one you are in. Spring is usually the season when the hobo hits the grit, but in times of little work men travel more than when conditions are settled. Nothing to do where you are? Then go some place else.

Private J. Marsh, military medal, 27th battalion, city of Winnipeg, Canadian infantry, passed through Portland yesterday en route to Canada from California. He reported that it took 13 days to ride from San Diego and that the sunny south is infested with visitors, both those arriving by automobile, passenger coach or boat, and those who get there by other means. The density of population is such that there are very few open jobs. So he flitted and is going back to Canada, where he thinks he has a chance to get some work. Marsh served several years overseas, was wounded, decorated, and was one of the youngest soldiers in his battalion.

* * *

A co-worker had lower living costs forcibly brought to mind yesterday when he bought golf balls for 50 cents that formerly cost 75 or more.

Windows.

By Grace E. Hall.

They look out on the street,
With eyes unwinking,
And many hours they give no light,
no glow;
They are like eyes we meet
And pass, unthinking,
And never know.

Sometimes we muse of them
In twilight gloaming,
And even ask what lies behind the
sill;
But mostly weary men,
With instincts homing,
Pass, tense and still.

Yet, there's a room, we know,
With more of meaning
Than we may ever guess, beyond that
frame;
We must draw very near,
And softly leaning,
Press 'gainst the pane.

Keep back reflections, too,
That, seeing clearly,
We may behold the beauties through
the gloom;
And, thus beholding, oft
We love most dearly
The wondrous room!

They look—but do not see,
These eyes unmoving,
And we look back, yet draw not near
to them;
Blind are they, yet we
Pause not for proving
The souls of men.

A KEY TO HUMAN HEARTS.

I planned and schemed, contrived
and dreamed
In fashioning a key
That might unlock the hearts of men,
Disclosing mystery;
I labored long, but toiled in vain—
Success ne'er came to me,
For God's great plan of inner man
Was veiled in secrecy.

I studied then the hearts of men
Through history's worn pages,
The great today, the "common clay,"
The masses and the sages;
In dumb despair I tore my hair,
Sank down in desolation,
And thus, in thought, a key was
wrought
To the sad situation.

This magic key's simplicity,
'Tis fashioned in one's youth,
With substance got from melting pot
Of double distilled truth,
'Tis counterpart of human heart,
And opens wide each door
Of mortal man since world began—
Now and forever more.

—MILTON C. ARMSTRONG.

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

The old year
The cold year
That started in on high,
Has passed now,
It's gassed now,
The new year's here to try.

The old year
Was bold here
With money running strong.
We spent it
And lent it
And scattered it along.

The new year
Is due here
To show us how to work;
To save it
And shave it,
No time for us to shirk.

The new year
'Tis true, dear,
Means saving every dime
But money
Like honey,
Accumulates in time.

—ALLAN TURNER.

ANTICIPATION.

But few days past the old, old
year—
And yet I swear that spring is near!
I saw a sunbeam on a hill—
Felt in the air a little thrill
That would not be denied.

And one I love, spoke of next May
In an expectant, gladsome way,
While overhead a fleecy cloud
Sailed rainbow-tinted, slow and proud
Defying wintry winds.

On bare, brown bough a little shoot—
Like fairy touch upon a lute—
Foretold the radiant hours to come—
When birds and bees no longer dumb
Will sing in melody.

Yes, spring, glad spring is on her
way,
March winds and April showers, then
May;
Anticipation, dream-filled hours,
Expectant hush, then fragrant
bowers—
Spring wirelessed today.

—JANETTE MARTIN.

A FANCY.

A fairy at twilight flitted my way;
In the whispering leaves I could hear
her say,
"Oh, what have you done with the
golden hours
I gave you at dawn, and what of
the flowers
You gathered last eve from the star-
fields bright?"
I trembled and cried, "They died in
the night;
And the golden hours, I have lost
them too
In the golden dream of what I
would do
If someone gave me the gift of song."
The fairy smiled, "You have done no
wrong,
For a golden dream is a priceless
gem
In the crown of a day." A tiny stem
Gave way 'neath soft departing feet;
It glided down my lips to greet
In one long kiss, Oh blissful ban!
The stem became the Pipes o' Pan!

—ROBERTA SPENCE.

TERRA INCOGNITA.

Where do I want to be?
Not in this place—not here!
Routine I know too well
Awaits my patience here.
Argentine! I wonder if
I'd love it there. Perhaps:

Full southern nights aglow
With man-made lights of
Latin revelry, and music.
Notes that might move my
Brain to feelings foreign
To its nature. Perhaps
There'd be dark eyes and hair
And the rhythm of a dance
That comes of sunny Spain.

Yes—I'd like it there.
Youth loves useless pleasures—
Success too trifling now.
When I am old mayhap
I'll love it here—I know
I will for Age loves sombre quiet.

—W. B. JONES.

NOW.

Now, is a cragged island,
Pushed upon a sea of foam;
Now, is a white ship, quivering,
To reach a fog-bound home.

Now holds the bud within her hand
Of an undying spring;
Now is the silent, mighty chord
That future ages sing!

Now is a sun that shines unseen,
While men still grope for light;
Or bird, that breaks a secret snare
And mounts in joyous flight.

Now is the golden coin of good
That has been, or will be;
Now knits the soul of man to God—
Now is eternity!

—MARY ALETHEA WOODWARD.