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LYNCHING AND PARDONS

Since President Roosevelt, seconded by a number of state governors, asked newspapers, preachers and teachers to take up the subject of lynching and denounce it, there has been a terrible inveighing against the crime. The public mind has been thoroughly refreshed on the subject of lynching. Writers and speakers took their cue. Columns and pages have been written, lectures and sermons delivered on the subject. Anyone who does not know that in this country we lynch people, is convicted of blindness and deafness. And yet with all the writing and talking, it would be hazardous to say that Judge Lynch has been buried. No negroes have been roasted the past few days but the country has been trained to suspect there are those ready to apply the torch upon sufficient provocation. It cannot be said at this time, that the crusade against lynching has been altogether successful. There is as yet no convincing evidence the evil is stamped out. In fact the course of procedure adopted may be considered an innovation and its efficacy may be doubted. Appeal to criminals to refrain from crime has never been effectual. The only result of the crusade so far discernible is the attracting of general attention to the growing tendency to lynching, which, all agree, is a serious menace to the government itself. The cause is yet to be agreed upon, the cure applied.

The alarm, it is to be noted, is sounded from the executive department of government. The president and governors speak as individuals but their utterances cannot be stripped of official significance and must be treated accordingly.

It is strongly hinted by the president and governors that the remedy lies in a reform in the co-ordinate branches of government, the legislative and judicial departments. The legislature, it is suggested, should enact laws bringing the legal procedure nearer the standard of perfection and the application of these laws should be freed from every vestige of technicality and delay. This lecture from the executive and addressed to the legislative and judicial departments is reactive and brings to the front the question of the duty of the executives, federal and state. It may be conceded that the course of legal procedure needs amendment. It

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Peacock who shot down a citizen of Polk county. Peacock had counsel and a fair trial and physicians were summoned and testified to his sanity before a jury that found him guilty. From the circuit court the cause was transferred to the chief executive and the governor summoned some physicians in the employ of the state and perhaps one other.

A hearing was had and the governor decided the accused was a degenerate and should not be put to death. The executive department therefore set aside the judgment of the court notwithstanding a protest from the states attorney and the people of the community where the crime was committed. In a statement to the public explanatory of his action the governor set out the fact that striking irregularities in the rotundity of the murderer's body were discovered and cognizance was not taken of these defects by the court. As described by the governor, Peacock is a miserable deformity sent into the world before his time, scarce half made up, a modern counterpart of the popular conception of Shakespeare's King Richard III. By measurement it was found to be as far from a point on this condemned murderer's breast back to his shoulders as from his shoulders down to his hips. Then it was found the head did not fit properly on the shoulders. But lack of comeliness did not stay his murderous hand nor convince the Polk county court that he should be exempt from the operations of the law. By a jury of twelve he was found guilty of murder in the first degree and by petition the people acquainted with the circumstances of the killing asked that the courts decree be carried out, but the governor set aside the judgment and turned down the petition an act calculated to sow seeds of lynch law in the minds of law abiding people. The expense of a costly trial, counted for naught with the pardoning power, and the people who bore the expense are left without the security, to which by law, they are entitled.

Peacock will hardly be released from the penitentiary by Governor Chamberlain, but other governors will fill the executive chair, and Peacock, with his nose pressed against the bars of his cell and gazing into space may exult in the over-compassionate nature of another executive on his rounds of prison inspection and it is not at all unlikely the people of Polk county will again be at the mercy of his gun. The same considerations that lead to a commutation of sentence, would move a Penoyer to give Peacock his freedom. With the crime of Peacock, and a demonstration of the power of pardon authority to nullify the safeguard that had expected through legal procedure, it had exceeded the head of the executive department of the state if the next murderer who starts into killing off Polk county citizens is strung up, though he measure as far from a point on his breast back to his shoulders as from the shoulders down to the tendons of his heels.

It is not necessary for the governor of Oregon to go to one of the Gulf states to find a cause for lynching nor should the executives, state and federal look to the courts for a remedy until the executive officers are ready to co-operate in meting out justice to criminals.

The anti-lynching movement was directed particularly against lynching of negroes in the south. Negroes are lynched in the south because it is there they live in great numbers and it is there they terrorize with their inhuman crimes. Since the days of slavery the southern negro has developed a species of bestiality that has been a promoter of lynching bees in the south and these unspeakable crimes have much to do with the anti-negro feeling and it is a feeling that cannot safely be ignored in appointing negroes to federal positions. The president has not recognized the conditions and used the diplomacy that might have been employed in making his appointments from among the negro race and, while it probably cannot be said that any lynchings are directly traceable to his appointments, they have intensified the feeling against the negro in many places thus promoting the crime he would now stop through public appeal. The motive of purpose on the part of the president and governors in their endeavor to check the growth of lynching, none will question, but it will require their co-operation along lines of official duty to put it down.

Though the spring season was late, attended by rains, the outlook for good crops is good. Grain and fruit in the Willamette valley look well and if rain at picking time does not interfere a good crop of hops will be saved. In southern Oregon, the peach crop is reported somewhat short on account of late frosts but other fruits, grain and hay promise a fair yield. In eastern Oregon grain is turning out fairly well and is commanding a good price. Live stock-men of the state are prosperous and have money to loan. The prairie crop of the state is expected to go beyond all previous yields. A fairly good run of salmon has been saved from the Columbia. The dairy interests of the state are expanding. New sawmills

are going up in the timber regions and lumber is commanding a good price. The mines of southern and eastern Oregon are attracting outside capital and activity is rife throughout the mining sections. The state of Oregon is out of debt and coffers of local banks are well filled with deposits. On the whole, Oregon has no complaint to make nor any particular concern in Wall street turmoil.

The Oregon delegation thinks J. W. Knowles the proper man for register of the Land office at LaGrande. The president thinks E. W. Davis the man. And there you are.

(Albany Herald.)

The selling mark for Oregon chittim bark has in former years been in the home market from \$40 to \$50 a ton, early this fall it went up to \$50 or \$50 or 4 to 4-1/2 cents a pound. During the last week, however the price of bark is booming it has been a strenuous time for both buyers and sellers and the end is not yet. There is much maneuvering and sparring for a advantage among all parties interested, and it is difficult to state the exact situation.

(Tillamook Headlight.)

It looks as though the timber syndicates are becoming, not only interested in the improvement of Tillamook bar, but in the railroad projects that are now under consideration. This is not surprising for give Tillamook the facilities to load lumber on cars or on large lumber carriers, the large timber owners in this county are perfectly aware that their holdings will double in value.

(Toledo, Lincoln Co. Reporter.)

Preparations are being made for one of the best fairs ever held in the county. It is expected that the exhibits—horticultural, agricultural and stock will be of a higher grade than heretofore. For those who want something by way of diversion, amusements will be furnished among which will be a regular old time Indian war dance in war dress and paint.

(Polk County Observer.)

The rains of Monday and Tuesday did very little damage in the hop yards around Dallas and should be present warm dry weather continue a fine crop will be harvested. Hops in western Polk county are of excellent quality, and an average yield is promised.

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