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MORAL CLEANLINESS.

Sheriff Linville has declared himself. So have the dive keepers. The one avers that he will rid the city of the dance hall evil, the other that the dance halls shall not only continue in their present character, but that they shall flourish, and this, with the sanction of the laws of the State of Oregon.

Last night a writ of mandamus was served on the sheriff forcing him to issue licenses to these men, licenses permitting the maintenance of dens of vice, bedlams, bawdy houses, brothels, or any other name we are pleased to dub them, where the boys of our city are allowed to enter and come in contact with women who have long since bid "adieu" to an appreciation of modesty, of honor or of self respect, where the unwary are wont to mingle with these gaudily garbed demi-modes only to leave minus money and awakened to realize that the esthetic virtues of Astoria's dance halls are difficult to perceive.

This topic is no milk for infants. The city is facing a crisis. The fact that those brothels are permitted to exist is not an argument in behalf of our moral standard; rather it bodes ill, and will only result in retarding the progress of this community. Persons with the interests of the city at heart will not cry out against an advocacy to rid these places of their lewd occupants. No self-respecting chief-of-police would depend upon a county officer, realizing, as he should, that his duty is to drive the women from the Astor street dives.

Unfortunately we have no executive at the head of our police department. The hearts of the rank and file are with the hearts of those who fight for the cleansing of the city, but they are mere menials, nonentities. They are void of authority. One move on their part without the heavy hand of a chief behind them would result in their walking the carpet. WHAT THE CITY NEEDS IS A CHIEF-OF-POLICE. THE ASTORIAN KNOWS IT. THE POLICE COMMISSION KNOW IT; THE PEOPLE KNOW IT. Even the chief-of-police knows it, but he cannot understand it.

So in order to protect the virtue of our women, the minds of our children, we must ask a county officer to do the work of a city official. The county officer accommodates us, and well, but the laws of the state are such, he must suffer the humiliation of practical arrest and at the request of the pusillanimous carrion who, apparently, are running the city the state, and, the tenderloin. It is high time the law permitting such high-handed action was repealed.

CHOICE OF WASHINGTON.

The selection of Washington as the place of meeting for the Russo-Japanese peace plenipotentiaries is of considerably more significance than most persons realize. In fact, it is a most important incident in the history of the country, and of the world. It is of especial significance for never before has the American capital been sought for the place for such a meeting. The impetus it affords toward attaining the characterization of a "world power" is greater than that following the Spanish-American war which resulted in the recognition of the country as one of the most influential nations in the world. Aside from this, the selection of Washington is convincing that both belligerents believe the United States to be so neutral, so disinterested and so absolutely impartial that its capital is the most desirable place for the meeting of their plenipotentiaries. This manifestation of confidence and the alacrity with which President Roosevelt's overtures for the consummation of a peace conference have been accepted by both countries should sufficiently establish the status of this country in relation to the war and to the powers that are waging it—a status than which, none could be more honorable and benevolent. Probably the most gratifying phase of the culmination of negotiations for the appointment of peace plenipotentiaries

is the fact that the choice of Washington was made by the powers on their own initiative and not at the seeking or even suggestion of this country.

About a year ago the world was plunged into profound sorrow on learning of the awful holocaust that had overtaken a gathering of German Lutheran Sunday school picnickers who sought diversion aboard a New York steamer, the General Slocum. All will recall the heart rending tales accompanying that disaster and the discovery following of preservers containing bars of iron. Commenting on the lugubrious anniversary of the Slocum horror, the New York Commercial, in its issue of June 16, says:

One year ago yesterday a thousand and thirty-one people lost their lives by the burning and the beaching of the excursion steamer General Slocum in the East river; two hundred and sixty six other passengers were injured, more or less; and bereavement was thus brought to nearly seven hundred families, most of them identified with one church organization.

It is one of the most extraordinary facts in the history of criminal prosecutions that of the seven men indicted by the Federal grand jury for direct responsibility of these deaths through neglect of duty, only one was brought to trial; that he has been tried three times; and that the jury at each trial failed to agree on a verdict. Quite as remarkable is it that no surviving sufferer from this absolutely execrable disaster has been able to collect damages from the company owning and operating the boat. And preposterous as the proposition may seem, the government is about to abandon all its cases, its sworn prosecutors being apparently of the opinion that the great expense involved does not warrant taking the chance of other mis-trials. And thus the backs of a score or more of men whose criminal negligence has caused so much death and suffering, and has practically destroyed the once-profitable Summer-excursion business in New York waters, are to go unashed!

A most humiliating confession by the government of the United States is that wherever its general system of administration is criminally lax individuals under it can always rely on escape from the meshes of the law! A disheartening commentary on the efficacy of trial by jury.

Still, the crime brings with it one compensation: Human life in New York waters is now better safeguarded aboard-ship than it has been before in a third of a century. The laws are more stringent, and the men charged with enforcing them do their duty more closely up to the line. But the more wholesome deterrent against law-breaking that might have come from a half-dozen convictions for homicide or manslaughter has been absolutely lost.

Must another thousand lives be similarly sacrificed some day as vicarious atonement for the sins of another set of government officials and steamboat men? It would not be surprising. We so soon forget!

COMMENT

"Seattle," says a "P.-I." head, "may have a purchasing agency." Following the deck reads, "Panama Canal supplies to be obtained here says Chief of Insular Bureau." Two sides to the story, apparently.

Two deaf mutes were arrested in Seattle for disturbing the peace. What a lively place the northern city must be!

A moving picture machine operator in Brooklyn, N. Y., was blown through a wall by the explosion of his apparatus. The audience was further entertained, naturally, with an impromptu "moving man" exhibition.

The "20th Century Limited" now makes the run between Chicago and New York in 14 hours. Ultimately it will break another world's record; it will furnish the newspapers with a story of the most disastrous wreck in the annals of railroad history.

A universal peace seems assured. The Russo-Japanese plenipotentiaries will meet in August; the Chicago teamsters contemplate ending their strike and the State Commission and officials of the Lewis and Clark exposition, we understand, have shaken hands.

Some Iowa farmers are under water as the result of a Mississippi overflow. The opening of the Truckee-Carson irrigation canal places Nevada farmers under similar, but more gratifying conditions.

Portland people are on a live "hunt" for a chief of police to succeed a dead "Hunt."

"May Build to Bend," quotes a head in the Oregonian, relative to a proposed

O. R. & N. extension. That the railroad "may bend, to build," is a reasonable assumption.

A five-column cut in the Oregonian carries the caption, "crowds entering the art building at which an opening reception was held yesterday." The "crowd" is composed of eleven people. How fearful a Portland crowd must be?

A boy was mangled in a Portland mill. This editor's shirt was mangled presumably in a Portland mangle and he will mangle the proprietor of that laundry if the opportunity affords.

"A short time ago, a drunken brute in human form," reads a communication to the Oregonian. Really. But monkeys imbibe occasionally.

"It was inadvertently stated," comments the Oregonian editorially in an apologetic strain. The recall explanations which have frequently graced the columns of Portland's great daily, impels the comment, "as usual."

"Where, oh where is that universal peace which our mild-mannered dreamers have been predicting for the last half century?" fervently questions an editorial in the Oregonian. "Nerveless efforts" are really more to the point.

Whiskey saved the life of a Weiser, Idaho, carpenter. In way of appreciation he will probably give the liquor a good opportunity to kill him.

IN LIGHTER VEIN.

Bobby Again.

Father—Why didn't you go to school today, young man?

Bobby—Gee, I'm getting absent minded. I clean forgot it.

Didn't Hurt Any.

Guest—See here, waiter, your sleeve just dipped into my soup.

Waiter—Oh! that don't make any difference, sir. This is an old coat.

Naturally.

Wiggs—I went to a memory school last night.

Wags—You don't say so! What was the name of it?

Wiggs—I can't rememoer.

Gave Herself Away.

Said he, "Little miss, Grant me just a kiss.

Tis for one—only one I sue, As she lifted her eyes She exclaimed in surprise, "Why the other men always Want two."

Revised Quotation.

Orator—Man's inhumanity to man makes countless mill—mill—

Auditor—Millionaires!

Penalties of Plutocracy.

"They say he lives like a millionaire." "It's true. He can't eat a blamed thing he likes."—Chicago Tribune.

Wanted to Know.

Bronson—Too bad about Smith. He was blown up last week.

Henpeck—Wife or gasoline?

Of Course.

Edith—I told Papa that you wanted to see him the next time you called.

Edward—What did he say?

Edith—He said all right—he wasn't afraid of you.

Appreciation.

Mr. Bore.—Ah! that's a lovely song It always carries me away.

Miss Cutting R. E. Marks—I'm sorry I didn't sing it for you earlier.

Great Scheme.

"Jack's new book is in the third edition."

"That's great!" "Yes; he inherited a fortune and bought out two editions himself."

A Difference.

Clergyman—Remember, my friend, "whom God has joined together, let no man put asunder."

Seeker after Divorce—Er—it was a justice of the peace.

No Secret About It.

It is no secret that for cuts, burns, etc., nothing is so effective as Bucklin's Arnica Salve. "It did not take long to cure a bad sore I had, and it is all O. K. for sore eyes, writes D. L. Gregory, of Hope, Texas. 25 cents at Charles Rogers' drug store.

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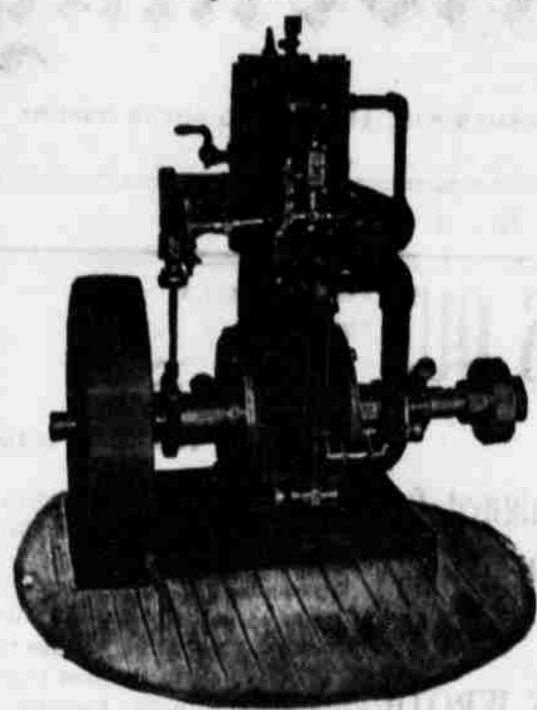
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