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A HINT FROM THE FIRE

IF THERE HAD BEEN a fair and square chance to do the work the conflagration on the east side this morning would not have reached the proportions which marked it when it was finally gotten under control. It makes plain the need of getting the thorough-fares on that side of the river into repair so that they will be rendered passable not only for ordinary traffic but for the fire engines in case of need. If it had been possible to use the streets the fire fighting could have been much more effectively done, not only because the fire could have been more closely approached but because it could have been fought on a level. As it was the men were forced to drag their hose through morasses at the foot of steep gulches, greatly hampering their work and rendering their efforts abortive.

PORTLAND PEOPLE AND VISITORS.

THERE is some ground for various criticisms that have been made by eastern visitors, both men and women, respecting Portland hospitality, or systematic and considerate attention to visitors. It must be confessed that Portland has not been accustomed to so much activity in this direction as has been displayed by the people of some western cities, notably Los Angeles. Yet we think that some of these criticisms are unwarranted, and are expressed in exaggerations, and without due consideration of existing circumstances.

Consider that Portland for weeks has been visited daily by several thousand eastern people, besides as many or more from within the old Oregon country, many of whom are almost as much strangers here as those from the east. Remember that there are several special events or functions every day, besides many matters to consider and attend to of ordinary routine character. Appreciate the fact that Portland people, while surely and fraternally welcoming all respectable visitors, have their own business and work and duties of all sorts to carry on and attend to. Looking at the case in this light we think that Portland people—while not as enthusiastic about their city, state and region as they might well be—have not been as remiss in hospitality or attention to visitors as is charged by an occasional one of them.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR FAMINE.

ABOUT two-thirds of the sixty provinces of Russia are facing a probable famine in the near future, in addition to Russia's other woes, the crops being for the most part a failure. There may be those who would regard this new calamity as a dispensation of an offended providence, but a more practical view is that it is rather due to the failure of the autocracy to give the czar's agricultural subjects the chance to succeed which as rulers in a paternal system of government they were morally bound to do.

THE PLAY

This man Fitch has never exploited his incomparable insight of femininity to better purpose than in the remarkable creation presented by the Belasco-stock company last night, "The Girl and the Judge." He has tried to discover and thereafter describe which of two weak souls was the weaker. The mother was a kleptomaniac; the father an incipient drunkard. The girl was just, loyal, true and admirable—for she stuck to the mother when the inevitable separation came—and suffered by so doing. The judge was admirable, too. He loved the girl and when the mother begged from him, his mother—well, you kind of wished you knew more men like the judge.

ways found a ready market abroad and so was a valuable medium of exchange. But the wheat failing the semi-serf farmers have little or nothing to fall back upon. And this persistent cropping of the land to wheat has in a measure exhausted the soil, and invited the famine that now seems imminent. Then another piece of folly and needless hardship is the custom of collecting taxes before instead of after harvest, making it necessary for the farmers to resort to usurious money lenders and so sacrifice part of the proceeds of their crops.

CITY EMPLOYEES AND LOAN SHARKS.

FROM ONE POINT OF VIEW—that of the man who really looks out for Number One, and who is not readily led into certain kinds of temptation, and who thinks everybody should be as strong and sensible and cold-blooded as he, or be trampled, over-remorselessly if he falls—from this point of view the order forbidding city employees to discount their salaries in advance to ten-per-cent-a-month brokers is a piece of unwarranted paternalism, of officious interference with private rights and liberties. So the order of the mayor forbidding city employees thus to sacrifice a portion of their salaries to the usurious warrant brokers has been criticised, and ridiculed by a morning contemporary, which despises any sort of human weakness to which it is not itself subject.

Nevertheless we think the order is a proper and useful one, and should be strictly enforced. One good reason for this is the protection of city employees against sharks who seek to amass wealth without labor off the earnings of many people, whom they keep in their power, and by this means deprive these employees' families of money that should properly go to them. But another and in itself a sufficient reason is that employees of the city should be men who can and will resist this form of temptation, who will get out and stay out of this form of bondage, who are not and will not be beholden to and at the mercy of men who whenever an opportunity occurs will "work" not only them but through them the city.

THE BITTER PILL FOR RUSSIA.

IT IS EASY to understand why Russia very much dislikes to pay Japan an indemnity. Not only does Russia think that such a payment would be too humiliating, but a billion dollars, or even half that much, is a good deal of money for Russia to raise just now. The total debt of Russia when the war broke out was about three billion five hundred million dollars. Her war loans to date aggregate eight hundred and seventy million dollars, making a total debt of four billion three hundred and seventy million dollars. The indemnity asked by Japan would run the total up to over five billion dollars, an immense sum for even so great a nation in area and number of people as Russia to owe. The resources of Russia are undoubtedly very great, but they are largely undeveloped, and under the present system cannot be rapidly developed. No wonder Russia prefers the doubtful and even slim chance of winning some victories yet in war to loading herself with hundreds of millions more debt.

Misdirected Charity.

From the Pendleton East Oregonian. Fully half the workmen seen on the streets of Pendleton every day will not work if offered a job, and residents should be careful whom they give free food and help. There is no need for these men to be idle in Pendleton at this time of the year. Farmers are looking for harvest hands every day, but this idle horde of alleged workmen is not looking for work. Half of them will not work, except for a day, if given the best job in the country.

La Follette Wouldn't Hang Fish!

At least Collier's says he wouldn't. In the issue of August 19 it says: "The governor of Wisconsin intends to stay at the helm as long as necessary. The legislation to which he was committed has been passed, but as the courts may throw it out, he will remain away from the United States senate until the matter is legally decided. Governor La Follette has been eagerly assailed by the conservative press, because, crushed to a jelly on the Illinois Central, he revealed a wish to hang Mr. S. Fish, the president. Much ado, indeed, about a choice of phrase. Of course, the governor couldn't hang the Central's president, but he gave himself expression to an emotion in which it is not difficult for any of us to share. Mr. La Follette, in his general attitude toward railway abuses, has the American people at his back."

SMALL CHANGE

A New York organ grinder made \$7,000 last year. Some political organ grinders did not do so well. Secretary Root had sold out all his corporation and trust interests, and there he is, with a long, cold lightning-rod up.

WE WERE WORSE OFF THAN RUSSIA

From the New York Sun. To the Editor of the Sun—Sir: A very little less than 100 years ago there was a second war between the United States and Great Britain, which from its declaration by congress on June 18, 1812, to the treaty of peace concluded on December 24, 1814, was waged for more than two years and a half. The battle of New Orleans was not fought and won by Jackson till 18 days later and after the treaty had been signed.

OREGON SIDELIGHTS

Pastures drying up; creamery products short. Hillsboro people expect that town to grow much in the near future. While not the best ever, hops in Yamhill county will make a good crop. Judge Galloway adjourned court at Dallas Tuesday at 4 o'clock to perform the marriage ceremony of his lifetime friend, Glen O. Holman, who was married that day to Mrs. Martha A. Holman of Dallas. Incidentally the lawyer has the best of the judge, for just after election last year, when Judge Galloway was being congratulated, he remarked that he would adjourn court any time to marry the first lawyer in his district who wanted him to perform.

THE GULLIBLE PUBLIC.

From Everybody's Magazine for September. Thomas W. Lawson was illustrating the gullibility of the public in accepting worthless stocks. "It reminds me of Washington White and his watch," he said. "Washington is a Boston colored man. A friend of his in an elevated train where White was rocking back and forth like a man who has trouble in his mind. 'How do, Washington?' said the friend. 'How do, Calhoun?' returned Washington, continuing his rocking. 'You ain't sick, he you?' 'No, indeed, Calhoun; I ain't enjoyin' no bad health.' 'Then why in the name of common life do you cavortin' back and forth dataway?' 'Not for a single beat did Washington check his regular oscillation as he answered: 'Calhoun, you know, Jerome Wade? Well, he sold me a striver watch for three dollars, and if I stops movin' like dis yere de watch don't go no more.'"

Death of Meriwether Lewis.

One of the most famous episodes of the "Natchez Trace" is thus described by John Swain in the September Everybody's: "A century ago there was no more promising youth in America than Meriwether Lewis. After a brilliant career as a soldier, he had been appointed private secretary to President Jefferson, and shown himself so trustworthy, so energetic and so successful, that Jefferson determined to make an exploration of the great territory he was just purchasing he selected Lewis as the one to accomplish it. Six years later, in 1809, his brilliant feat of accomplishment was over. He was but 35 years old—Lewis left his beloved west for the last time and set out for Washington to confer with the president. He crossed the Mississippi at the Chickasaw Bluffs, where Memphis now stands, and taking Indian trails south-easterly, struck the Trace at the crossing of the Tennessee river, in Lauderdale county, Alabama. He came alone, on the night of October 11, to the 'stand' or tavern of Robert Grinder, above the crossing of Little Swan, 71 miles from Nashville. A heavy storm was raging. In the night the women in an adjoining building heard a shot. In the morning Lewis was found dying, a pistol beside him. Grinder circulated the report that

JOURNEY OF LEWIS AND CLARK

August 21.—Lewis and Clark headed separate parties at this stage of the journey to the Rocky mountains, and each reports his expedition separately. With Lewis' party: The man with Captain Lewis were chiefly employed in dressing the skins belonging to the party who accompanied Captain Lewis. The party consisted of Captain Lewis, his wife, and his two children, accompanied by about 50 men with their women and children. After a short council all the Indians were treated with an abundant meal of balled Indian corn and beans. The poor wretches had been almost starved, and received this new luxury with great thankfulness. Out of compliment to the chief we gave him a few dried squashes we had brought from the Mandans, and he declared it was the best food he had ever tasted except sugar. A small lump of which he had received from his sister; he declared he would be happy to be able to live in a country which produced so many good things, and we told him that soon the white man would put it in their power to live below the mountains where they might themselves cultivate these foods. They were much pleased with this information and as they were in excellent humor we began our journey by buying five good ones for five good ones by giving for each merchandise which originally cost us about six dollars. In the evening with a drag formed of bushes we caught 523 very good fish, most of them large trout, which we gave to the Indians.

THE VIEWS OF ONE

By Ambrose Bierce. I have before me a letter addressed thus: "Mr. Ambrose Bierce, The Olympia, 14th and Roanoke Sts., Washington, D. C." And that is exactly where I live. The address is accurate to a comma. Now, this letter was not only addressed to Washington, D. C. but it was mailed there—a local letter, which should have reached me in a few hours. Well, it reached me in 18 days via Olympia, the capital of the state of Washington. In the journey from the Potomac to the Potomac, it had taken in the Pacific Coast—a little excursion eminently satisfactory, no doubt, to the blockhead that planned it.

Beef Trust's Defender.

The services to the beef trust of one George E. Roberts are thus summed up by Charles E. Russell in his "Postscript" to "The Greatest Trust in the World," in the September Everybody's: "But the main reliance of the trust was upon an article published and defended by the Garfield report, and written ostensibly for the Des Moines Register and Leader by George E. Roberts. Who is George E. Roberts? Professional politician and director of the United States mint. What are his claims to expert knowledge of the cattle industry or the business of the packers? Nothing. What, then, brings him into the field of nothing but rather overpaid? He must go back again to the strings and wires. Mr. Roberts' article filled four or five columns in the Register and Leader. If you believe me, it consisted of nothing but retailed quotations from the statements of the Garfield report, apparently made with the idea that if those astonishing assertions were only enough times repeated people might believe them. It was a masterpiece of the subject to elicit laughter by asserting that the packers' profits are merely trifling. Mr. Roberts, good, faithful, and honest as he may be, is solemnity and without a particle of profanity, to parrot that statement. It is time to have done, once and for all, with this nonsense. I suppose the human mind has never occupied with a feebler conceit."

Carried It Beyond Precedent.

From the Boston Globe. Republican Governor Hoar of Kansas nominates Democratic Governor Folk of Missouri for president, which is more than the governor of North Carolina ever did for the governor of South Carolina.

Lewis had shot himself, and the explorer was buried beside the road close to the tavern. At Washington then, and by many historians since, Grinder's story has been believed, but by the officers of that vicinity and by the women who lived at Grinder's, only one opinion was ever entertained—that Grinder had murdered him for his money. Grinder, in any case, was known to have money in his possession after Lewis' death. He sold out his place and moved away. But the fame of Lewis has been blotted to this day by the story that he took his own life in a fit of melancholia. For many years his grave remained unmarked. Then the Tennessee legislature appropriated \$500 for a monument; the bones were dug up and identified; an irregular county, having the grave as its approximate center, was named Lewis, and a few acres about the monument set aside for a park. Since then nothing has been done to care for it, but the broken column stands as it was placed, beside the forsaken road.

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Oh, Such a Difference!

From the Chicago Chronicle. Mark Twain on his last visit to his birthplace—Hannibal, Missouri—told to the school children a true story about a schoolboy. "This boy," he said, "awoke one morning very ill. His groans alarmed the household. The doctor was sent for and came post haste. He said, 'Well, said the doctor, as he entered the sickroom, 'What is the trouble?' 'A pain in my side,' said the boy. 'Any pain in the head?' 'No, sir.' 'Is the right hand stiff?' 'A little.' 'How about the right foot?' 'That's stiff, too.' 'The doctor winked at the boy's mother. 'Well, he said, 'you're pretty sick. But you'll be able to go to school on Monday. Let me see, today is Saturday and it is today Saturday.' said the boy in a vexed tone. 'I thought it was Friday.' 'Half an hour later the boy declared himself healed and got up. Then they packed him off to school, for it was Friday, after all.'

Has It?

From the Minneapolis Journal. There is a question as to whether or not Europe, and the day of stand-patience seems to have passed, in view of the fact that Europe, which takes two-thirds of our exports, is moving in the matter of protecting itself wherever it can against exorbitant charges on exports. It Doesn't Work. From the Cleveland Leader. Many men spend their lives advertising themselves and then expect to be paid for it in transportation to Paradise.