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SATURDAY, MAY 17, 1902.

**THE OREGONIAN WHISTLES.**

The Portland Oregonian is in doubt as to the result of the election next month. It is in a state of panic. It is arguing that in the event that Chamberlain is elected governor, we can expect no aid from a republican president and congress, for the Lewis and Clark fair or any more assistance in making the Columbia river free to navigation.

It is a pity that this government is so organized that everybody has to blow through the same quill if they hope to accomplish anything. Surely, President Roosevelt and the republican congress are not of such calibre as to ask the politics of the state before they lend their aid to a worthy object? We hope they are not of such a narrow stripe! By the way, South Carolina was not a republican state before Charleston had her exposition?

For, to these thirty, yea fifty years the Columbia river has been ready to be opened to free navigation and for twenty years the republican party has been in a position to give this boon to the people, and yet it has always been denied. Why? Because the republican party was influenced by interests contrary to the making of this great national improvement.

The Oregonian knows that the republican party is obligated to do nothing in connection with making the Columbia river free to navigation. It knows that delay is its object, to serve its masters, those who contribute the sinews of war. The fact of the matter is, if Mr. Chamberlain is elected governor, and every democrat, from constable up, is elected, no cold water will be thrown upon the Lewis and Clark fair or on the enterprise of opening the Columbia river, but, on the other hand, the powers that be would be just enough alarmed to get a move on themselves, in order that they might check the tendency of the people to desert their standard. The republican party has had a cinch on Oregon so long that it has become to believe that it owns it, and it treats it accordingly, largely ignoring it in national affairs.

When Oregon "goes democratic" its tune will be different. The fact of the matter is, the Portland paper is whistling now quite regularly to keep its own courage up. It begins to realize the feelings of the boy who had to do something to steady his nerve while passing at night through a graveyard, so it whistles that a republican defeat would mean failure to the Lewis and Clark fair and an open Columbia river.

It is a wonder that the Columbia river has not been opened long before this. The republicans have been in power long enough to accomplish it.

How much longer does it want? The fact of the matter is, the Oregonian is scared and desperate. It sees defeat staring it in the face!

**THE SLEEPING OESOPHAGUS.**

It is a cruel thing when a man has to explain his own jokes. Mark Twain has had to do this because so many people have written to ask him what he means by a certain sentence in his "Double-Barrelled Detective Story." It was only a joke, Mr. Clemens says, only a harmless, well-intentioned little joke; but it has excited general suspicion. Therefore Mr. Clemens has been moved to write a letter to the Springfield Republican in which he says:

To the editor of the Springfield Republican: One of your citizens has asked me a question about the "oesophagus," and I wish to answer him through you. This in the hope that the answer will get around and save me some penmanship for I have already replied to the same question more than several times, and I am not getting as much holiday as I ought to have.

"I published a story lately, and it was in that, that I put the oesophagus. I will say privately that I expected it was to bother some people—in fact, that was the intention—but the harvest has been larger than I was calculated upon. The oesophagus has gathered in the guilty and the innocent alike, whereas I was only fishing for the innocent—the innocent and confiding. I knew a few of these would write and ask me; but I was not expecting that the wise and learned would call upon me for succor. However, that has happened and it is time for me to speak up and stop the inquiries if I can, for letter writing is not restful to me, and I am not having so much fun out of this thing as I counted on. That you may understand the situation I will insert a couple of sample inquiries. The first from a public instructor in the Philippines:

"Santa Cruz, Ilocos Sur, P. I., Feb. 13, 1902.—My Dear Sir: I have just been reading your latest story entitled 'A Double-Barrelled Detective Story.' In it occurs this passage: 'Far in the empty sky a solitary oesophagus slept, upon motionless wing; everywhere brooded stillness, serenity, and the peace of God.' Now, there is one word I do not understand, namely, 'oesophagus.' My only work of reference is the 'Standard Dictionary,' but that fails to explain the meaning. If you can spare the time I would be glad to have the meaning cleared up, as I consider the passage a very touching and beautiful one. It may seem foolish to you, but consider my lack of means away out in the northern part of Luzon. Yours very truly,"

Do you notice? Nothing in the paragraph disturbed him but that one word. It shows that that paragraph was most ably constructed for the deception it was intended to put upon the reader. It was my intention that it should be emotional and touching, and you see yourself that it fetched his public instructor. Alas, if I had but left that one treacherous word out, I should have scored! scored everywhere; and the paragraph would have slid through every reader's sensibilities like oil, and left not a suspicion behind.

The other sample inquiry is from a professor in a New England university. It contains one naughty word (which I cannot bear to suppress), but he is not in the theological department, so it is no harm. "Dear Mr. Clemens: 'Far in the

empty sky a solitary oesophagus slept upon motionless wing.'

"It is not often I get a chance to read much current literature, but I have just gone through at this belated period, with much gratification and edification, your 'Double-Barrelled Detective Story.'

"But what in hell is an oesophagus? I keep one myself, but it never sleeps in the air or anywhere else. My profession is to deal with words and oesophagus interested me the moment I lighted upon it. 'I'll be eternally, coeternally cussed' if I can make it out. Is it a joke, or am I an ignoramus?"

Between you and me, I was almost ashamed of having fooled that man, but for pride's sake I was not going to say so. I wrote and told him it was a joke—and that is what I am now saying to my Springfield inquirer. And I told him to carefully read the whole paragraph and he would find not a vestige of sense in any detail of it. This also I commend to my Springfield inquirer.

I have confessed, I am sorry—partially. I will not do so any more—for the present. Don't ask me any more questions; let oesophagus have a rest—on the same old motionless wing.

—Mark Twain.

New York City, April 10, 1902.

Comment by the Republican.

The Double-Barrelled Detective Story" is the most elaborate of burlesques on detective fiction, with striking melodramatic passages in which it is difficult to detect the deception, so ably is it done. As for the paragraph, which has so admirably illustrated the skill of Mr. Clemens's ensemble and the carelessness of readers, here it is:

It was a crisp and spicy morning in early October. The lilacs and laburnums, lit with glory hung burning and flashing in the upper air, a fairy bridge provided by kind nature for the wingless, wild things that have their home in the treetops and would v. sit together; the larch and the pomegrate flung their purple and yellow flames in brilliant broad splashes along the brilliant sweep of the woodland; the sensuous fragrance of innumerable deciduous flowers rose upon the swooning atmosphere; far in the empty sky a solitary oesophagus slept upon motionless wing; everywhere brooded stillness, serenity and the peace of God."

The success of Mark Twain's joke recalls to mind his story of the petrified man in the cavern, whom he described most punctiliously, first giving a picture of the scene, its impressive solitude and all that; then going on to describe the majesty of the figure, casually mentioning that the thumb of his right hand rested against the side of his nose; then after further description, observing that the fingers of the right hand were extended in a radiating fashion, and, recurring to the dignified attitude and position of the man, incidentally remarked that the thumb of the left hand was in contact with the little finger of the right—and so on. But it was so ingeniously written that Mark, relating the history years later, in an article which appeared in that excellent magazine of the past, the Galaxy, declared that no one ever found out the joke, and, if we remember right, that that astonishing old mockery was looked for in the region where he, as a Nevada newspaper editor, had located it. It is certain that Mark Twain's jumping frog has a "good more 'plints'" than any other frog.



The first necessity of athletics is a sound stomach. Food is the source of all physical strength, but to extract and assimilate the strength from food requires that the stomach and other organs of digestion and nutrition should be in a condition of good health. What is true of the athlete is true of every man and woman; physical health and vigor depend upon the digestion and assimilation of food.

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Miss Julia V. Teller, of 2518 Prairie street, Milwaukee, Wis., is President of the German Young Woman's Union. Her opinion of Peruna is given in the following words:

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