

The Sentinel

A GOOD PAPER IN A GOOD TOWN
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TRIP TO SOUTH AMERICA

It isn't often that the old man of the Sentinel finds anything in America's most popular periodical so interesting as that article "Beyond Panama," which is given the first place in last week's Post. It is over fifty years ago that, suffering from impaired health, at the age of twenty-five the writer prescribed for himself a sea voyage to South America. It proved beneficial, but it was largely through reading a series of articles in the old Post of those days—a paper then not much larger than the Sentinel of today—that our quest led us out under the southern cross and into the land where winter and summer are so completely transposed with our home seasons here where the Great Bear is our distinctive constellation.

And to indicate how poorly he chose his way in quest of health he may note that he reached Rio de Janeiro in the southern dog days, and had to go to a hospital in that city, where his physician, the wise old Senor Azervado, told him that he had been a sufferer from dyspepsia and that he would be better after that siege of "febre amarela," which is Portuguese for yellow fever. While he was far from enjoying the days he spent in that "casa de saúde," which was the local name for the hospital, he was at least thankful that the doctor during his European studies had learned the English language and assured him that he would be better after that unpleasant experience, instead of falling a victim to the scourge.

Of course, that was the proper thing for a doctor to say in any event, and the fact that the writer half a century later is penning these lines here in Coquille shows that the wise old medico knew what he was talking about. Just then, though, and until the fever was broken up—he was not so sure that the doctor was right; and while he lay through the long, hot nights of that February summer, listening to the ravings of his fellow patients in neighboring rooms as they were passing out into the great unknown, his outstanding remembrance is of wishing that he were at home again and thinking it possible that he might never again see his home and parents on the shores of Long Island.

But he soon recovered and enjoyed a season of convalescence up in a health resort in the mountains accessible by street cars, where the time passed pleasantly enough in resting through the hot days and cool nights.

Of course, such an experience resulted in expenses not provided for in our budget. Our sea captain was our good angel, and paid all our bills—something for which we were extremely grateful to him. After we had taught school at home the following winter and earned the money to repay the good captain we did so, though the aspect of the matter changed years afterwards while we were on a visit at our old home back from Kansas we learned that our good father had paid that debt before we did, and the master of the Adaline C. Adams had done so unspontaneously like a thing as to pocket our second payment without a word. This fact we did not learn until long after our father had gone to his reward, and the opportunity to thank him was no longer ours.

That voyage to South America, however, on which we started early in November, just a few days after the presidential election of 1872, in which the writer cast his first vote, neither for General U. S. Grant nor Horace Greeley, but for Charles O'Connor—a real democrat—and returned about mid-May is the reason the summers of his life out number its winters by two.

The Post's article thus recalls our early interest in South America, and its travel stories of that continent published fifty years ago, which did so much to inspire it. Even at that time, though, the writer was planning to go west and start a newspaper as he did about a year after his return home in 1873.

LESS CLEMENCY FOR CRIMINALS

Deputy Sheriff Malehorn hands us this article from the editorial page of a recent issue of the Oregonian, which he thinks hits the nail pretty squarely on the head though it does not exhaust the subject. We commend it because our own thinking has been along the same line, and we believe clemency in such cases is too often overdone. The article is headed "Crime and the Unfit."

In our dealings with crime and criminals, as Chief of Police Vollmer of Berkeley declares, we follow the devious and stupid paths of the past, for no better reason than that such used to be the custom. Our punishments for criminals are fixed and arbitrary, and we concern ourselves more with the imposition of these, subject to sentimental relaxation, than we do with the causes of crime or the mind of the criminal. It is well known that the typical criminal career consists of alternate periods of freedom and imprisonment, from which it might well be reasoned that punishment does not always improve the morals of the punished. The police speak off-handedly of this or that criminal as a "two-time loser," or a "three-time loser," indicating thereby that he has twice or thrice been confined in the penitentiary, alias the "big house." And the folly of turning such a fellow loose upon society when he shall have served the prescribed sentence, or part of it, does not often occur to us.

But Chief Vollmer is styled "the scientific policeman." His right to the appellation is undisputed. For he had studied crime and the criminal mind, and he speaks with authority thereof. Moreover, the facts bear out his deductions and findings. Certain individuals are warped and twisted as to character, and, unless fear of the law rises superior to their criminal instincts, they will inevitably prey upon society. In a sense these criminals are afflicted with an illness, of a chronic character, and to believe that a few months or years in prison will cure them is to be unwisely optimistic. The records show clearly that a heavy percentage of criminals never are "cured" by incarceration. For the matter of that, we regard imprisonment as a punishment more than aught else. We have never quite regarded it as a measure of social protection, which through restraint of confirmed criminals necessarily reduces crime.

In a word, the scientific policeman believes that the unfit should be permanently restrained, whatever the law may say of the degree of seriousness of any particular crime, and that the fit—those who are not criminals at heart—should be restored to society after punishment. We restrain the physical leper, lest his disease contaminate the healthy, but we do not even pretend to restrain, in any permanent sense, the confirmed and habitual criminal. Which is the greater risk? We do not even prohibit, save here and there and in an experimental way, the reproduction of criminal types. This in face of the fact, long since attested that the unfit produce the unfit, and that families are tainted with criminality as with any other disease or tendency that may be transmitted through heredity.

Chief Vollmer says we release the confirmed criminal when his fixed term is expired, to turn again to crime. Our folly is not confined to this. We free him if we can in the courts; we plead for lighter sentences—and when he is safely in prison we urge either pardon or parole. By the appearance of good conduct, which has nothing whatever to do with the true mental attitude of the prisoner, almost any inmate of the penitentiary can procure his comparatively early release. Of the parole system Chief Vollmer says: "A large number of these men can never be rehabilitated or cured. Yet we have a system of allowing ministers, public-spirited citizens, reformers and the like, to sit on our parole boards and say which prisoners shall be turned loose."

It is his suggestion that a board of alienists pass upon the qualifications of the prisoner for liberty. Certainly he is right in declaring that parole boards are peculiarly prone to error, as the subsequent criminal activities of paroled convicts so frequently attest. Yet of late the public has looked with some degree of dubiety upon the profound profession of psychiatry. It appears, in certain criminal trials, that the opinion of one alienist may usually be countered by the opinion of another, and hence arises a suspicion that the science is not yet exact. Assuredly, such a board would be more competent than the customary one, with its more or less casual personnel—and to temper its purely scientific judgment with sound practical knowledge would greatly increase its competency. Police officers of long experience, who have learned the criminal mind by actual contact with it, might with great

benefit to the public welfare supplement the more erudite, but not more conclusive, opinions of the trained alienist. Between these two methods of scrutiny, science and experience, he would indeed be the cleverest of criminals that pulled the wool over the eyes of clemency.

Allusion has been made to the influence of heredity, which, says Chief Vollmer, is one with the influence of environment in the making of criminals. It must appear to any rational person, who has the greater good of society near to heart, that the sterilization of confirmed criminals is well nigh mandatory. While one of these remains unsterilized there remains with that individual the not to be exaggerated peril of transmission of the criminal taint. The confirmed criminal is obviously unfit to augment the race, and should be so dealt with as to safeguard the future society. To argue otherwise is to deny the truth, abundantly proved, and to invite new and multiplied criminality.

We make slow progress in all these respects. We are, as Chief Vollmer reminds us, at least a century and a half behind our own times. And certainly we are lamentably lax in law enforcement, though our laws are of the best. We pay a heavy price for our blindness and laxity, but it appears that the price is exacted that we may learn the lesson. Having learned it we will have done with emotionalism and archaic administration, and begin building for the future while we yet serve the present. Corrective training in youth, segregation and sterilization of the unfit in maturity—these policies should go far toward the elimination of crime.

THE PAINT NOT YET DRY

Portland Oregonian
There are time when some all-revealing incident or episode draws back the veil, and proves to us that we are still struggling dumbly onward to first base in Noah Webster's immortal contribution to English letters. As witness that perfect story in the news of a day or so ago, which dealt with the tourist and the spring. It was on an Oregon highway, and the cold, clear water, deceitful stuff, was surmounted by a sign which read: "This water is contaminated." The tourist, dusty and warm, bent and drank deeply.

As he bent to drink again along came a highway official, who gazed at him aghast, and called his attention to the warning signboard. The tourist said that it had him beaten. He thought it meant some new kind of mineral water, and so he had been right glad to find it and to wet his whistle. As he went on his way, filled with contaminated water and fearful reflections, the highway official revised the sign to read: "This water is rotten; not fit to drink." There it stands to bear witness to the tale, that plain, unvarnished signboard.

Phineas T. Barnum lived in the long ago and made a fortune on this sort of blissful simplicity. In his delightful recollections the master showman told of a problem that worried him, but not for long, at the old museum which stood at the corner of Broadway and Ann street, New York. The hoiest country folk came in droves to see the mermaid, the two-headed calf, the petrified giant, and sundry marvels of the kind—but being thrifty folk they brought their lunches, and they stayed and stayed. Barnum's problem was to get them out of the museum, without offense, that he might fill it again with new patrons. And he chuckled as he devised this sign, prominently posted and bearing a flat with extended index:

"This Way to the Great Egress!"
Did it work? Fie on you for doubting its thorough workability. Young and old, whiskered and beardless, dame and daughter, they dashed and crowded hopefully, eagerly onward toward the Great Egress. And having found it, they were outside on Ann street and another admission fee was necessary if they wished to go in again. As we say, Barnum lived and labored in the long ago, but the paint on the highway department's new signboard scarcely is dry at this moment.

It was in the long ago in the sixties of the last century that this Sentinel writer visited Barnum's old museum. The main exhibits he now recalls were the fat woman, weighing about 650 pounds and the fat man, who tipped the beam somewhere about 950 pounds. And it wasn't clothes that did it for he was naked to the waist.

WHERE WAS THE \$100 LOST?

From Curry county recently came a letter to the state market agent from a business man, stating that his son will become of age this fall, and that when he was born he invested one hundred dollars for him. "This one hundred dollars has grown to a little more than two hundred dollars now," writes the father, "but when I get to looking the matter over I find

that the two hundred is not worth quite as much in purchasing value, as the original one hundred when invested. I would like to have the state market agent tell me where I lost one hundred dollars."

It does not seem to us a matter of general public interest, so we do not publish the long letter received from Dr. Stricker, secretary of the state board of health, to apprise our readers that on and after July 31, it will be unlawful for any one to engage in hair dressing, facial massage or skin treatment without a state license. It seems to us that things have reached a pretty fine point when hair dressing requires such a license and the expense of another department of state records; but, of course, it furnishes more jobs to be paid for by the taxpayers of Oregon. They, perhaps, ought to be interested in knowing that the state is now maintaining such a board as that of "Cosmetic Therapy" at public expense at 304 Fitzgerald building, Portland.

The people everywhere have done reasonably well. The progress of the world attests the fact. But leaders of one kind and another—kings, presidents, cabinet ministers, governors, legislators, county commissioners, mayors, councilmen, school directors, township trustees—have blundered inexorably. The main issue today is taxes, which have become so heavy as to threaten industry itself.—E. W. Howe.

W. P. Bryan says the Scopes case will be "tried not in the newspapers but in the courts." A contemporary thinks what the courts say will be of little moment compared with the opinion of the whole people of the United States.

If earthquakes must recur, says a Portland paragraph, they perhaps couldn't choose a more favorable arena than the great open spaces in the vicinity of the Yellowstone park.

Casualties in the East

The middle west today counted its dead at 34 and estimated its property damages at more than \$1,000,000 in the wake of wind and electric storms and a severe heat wave, says a Chicago press dispatch of last Monday.

Heaviest property loss was in central Indiana, where a terrific wind and rain storm ripped roofs from houses, up rooted trees, leveled telephones and telegraph poles and flooded scores of cellars.

Five persons were drowned in Iowa as thousands sought relief from high temperatures and extreme humidity.

Four persons succumbed to the heat in St. Paul and Minneapolis, where the mercury climbed to 92.

Two were drowned and two died from heat prostration in Chicago. Eight were drowned in Indiana.

Two deaths from heat prostration were reported in Nebraska, one person was drowned in that state.

Two were drowned in St. Louis. Eight were drowned in Michigan.

Mother Bear on His Trail

Mark Steckel, who resides near the Vaughan camp on Isthmus Inlet, where he is employed, suddenly changed his mind about taking a cub bear for a pet.

He was picking blackberries when he came across the pretty little cub. He gave chase and soon picked up the cub but the little bear squealed vociferously. Steckel tried to quiet it but hearing a noise in the brush looked up and saw a bear, about as large as an elephant, coming straight for him.

He dropped the little bear and made a bee line for home, about a mile away. For a time he thought the mother bear was gaining on him, but evidently her size was a handicap for her and he dashed through the door of his home, without getting another view of her.

Henceforth he declares he will just keep on picking blackberries instead of picking up stray cub bears, no matter how cute the little ones seem.—Coo's Bay Times.

It isn't often in these days that one gets something for nothing, and so when it was announced that J. W. Hastings, of Prosper, had turned the trick, curiosity was rampant. Hastings was a soldier in the world war and was disabled. Since the state law provides such men may have free fishing privileges, the county clerk's crew refused to accept any fee for issuing the paper.—Harbor.

The Hibernia Savings and Loan Society of San Francisco has adopted a system of computing interest on savings accounts which is a step forward and an advantage to its depositors who systematically add to their accounts from month to month. Read the announcement which appears in this issue and explains the system or write to the bank for particulars.

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