

The Evening Herald

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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1923

THE RELIABILITY OF NEWSPAPERS

BY ARTHUR L. CLARKE Editor, The San Francisco Chronicle

IT'S TIME for the newspaper worm to turn. Every so often some self-righteous individual with an improving disposition rears back on his hind legs and emits a doleful howl about the unreliability of the press.

Inadvertent publication of any news story not strictly conforming to the facts invariably is the signal for a sweeping condemnation often by those who know better.

In virtually every big city of the country men and women of more or less standing in the community are prone to assume a smug air of wisdom and to assert with conviction: "You can't believe a word you read in the newspapers."

It has come to be quite the common thing with these volunteer critics not only to disparage the press in so far as concerns authenticity of its news, but likewise to impugn the motives of newspaper managements.

The most charitable thing they find to say concerning the character of newspaper writers in general is: "Oh, well; you can't blame the reporters so much; they have to write what they're told by the men in charge."

If statements of this sort came from ignorant people and reflected only the attitude of the uninformed it would be folly to take cognizance of them. Unfortunately this is not the case.

Bankers, lawyers, brokers, merchants, railroad officials, politicians, society women, ministers of the gospel, steamship officials, and others who pride themselves on their probity and personal integrity, too frequently do not hesitate to lie inconspicuously to the newspapers.

A rumor reaches a newspaper office to the effect that a bank merger is to be consummated. A reporter is sent to ascertain the facts. Does the bank president admit the truth of the rumor but ask that, for business reasons, the matter be not made public for a few days? He does not. He tells the reporter there is no truth in the rumor. A few days later the deal goes through and—the newspaper knows the bank president lied.

A public official grants an interview, in which he makes certain statements. The next day political or other pressure is brought to bear. Does he come out in the open and admit his mistake or his change of heart? He does not. He promptly repudiates the interview of the day before and—the reporter knows he lied.

A society matron's daughter becomes engaged to a prominent man, but the family is not ready to make the announcement. Does the society matron tell the truth and ask that the matter be kept quiet for a few days? She does not. She pretends surprise and denies there is any foundation for the rumor. The following week the announcement is made, and—the society editor knows the woman has prevaricated.

So it goes on down the line. People who would not think of deceiving business associates, people who would scorn to resort to untruth or subterfuge in ordinary affairs, men and women whose word literally is as good as their bond in financial matters—these are the people for the most part, who have no companions of conscience about deliberately lying to a newspaper representative.

The remarkable feature of the situation is that the very persons who so carelessly handle the truth when talking to a newspaper representative are the first to raise a howl over the unreliability and inaccuracy of the press.

Every newspaper reporter in the country knows his job is not worth

two cents if he is detected intentionally misrepresenting facts or misquoting what has been told to him. His job is to tell the truth of what he sees and hears and in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred he can be depended upon to get things straight and to write exactly what has been told to him.

Personal Mention

J. H. Van Meter, a well-known farmer of Poe Valley, was in town yesterday on business.

W. K. Sutherland accompanied by Mrs. Sutherland, is here for a brief business visit from Algoma.

G. W. Jennings, of Shippington, underwent a major operation at a local hospital yesterday morning.

W. C. Townsend is a county seat visitor this week from his ranch south of town.

J. A. Johnson and H. L. Jones, both farmers on the Merrill road, were here yesterday morning purchasing supplies.

H. E. Montgomery and H. C. Smith are tourists here from Buffalo, New York. They are stopping at the White Pelican hotel.

John Loomis of Brownsville, Oregon, arrived here Saturday night for a visit with his brother, Charles Loomis, and family.

William McBeth was operated upon at a local hospital Sunday night. He is reported to be doing as well as could be expected.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Clay visited with Mr. and Mrs. T. O. Hague over Sunday at their ranch on the Keno road.

Ivan Houston, a member of the pine beetle survey force, is in town for a few days from the Swan lake camp.

Mrs. Frank Obenchain, who has been here for the past few days as the guest of Mrs. George Thrasher, returned to her home in Bly yesterday morning.

Mr. and Mrs. Brotherton were hosts Sunday evening at dinner for Mr. and Mrs. Fred Abbey, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Abbey, Miss Pauline Cliff and Miss Helen Abbey.

Lieutenant Mabel Goodwin will arrive in Klamath Falls on the evening train from San Francisco and will remain here with the Salvation Army, assisting captain Clara Nelson.

Mr. and Mrs. M. S. West left this morning on their trip east. West will attend to business affairs in Washington, D. C., and Mrs. West will visit with relatives in various eastern cities.

E. V. Smith and son Clyde of Grants Pass are here for a visit with their sons and brothers. Earl and Claude Smith, young business men of this city. While here the Grants Pass men will spend part of their time hunting ducks.

Marvin Cross, a prominent resident of Bly, is in town for two days business visit. Cross has been on a trip through the eastern Oregon counties buying furs. He reports that the demand of eastern buyers for coyote fur is as surprising as the price being paid for this particular fur.

Women of the city are attempting to organize a child's study department, or club, to be under the direction of the Woman's Library club, and a meeting will be held at 3 o'clock tomorrow afternoon in the library club rooms and every woman in the city who is interested is asked to attend.

Mrs. W. T. Lee and Mrs. Levi McDonald left on the morning train for Medford where they will meet W. T. Lee who will drive them in his car to Corvallis, where they will witness the football game between O. A. C. and University of Oregon on Saturday. From Corvallis they will go on to Portland for a brief visit. Lee has been there this past week attending the tax commission conference.

AMERICAN CANNED MILK POPULAR IN RUSSIA

PETROGRAD, Nov. 14.—American evaporated milk is finding an enormous sale in Russia. Nearly as much milk in tins including brands never retailed in the United States, is shown in the shop windows of Petrograd and Moscow as can be found in American cities. Many of these brands apparently are put up exclusively for the export trade.

The price here for a one-pound tin is from 29 to 30 cents. American milk may be bought at the railway stations, in the villages, and at the great markets in the cities. In many instances it is peddled by children.

Gertrude's Millinery 227 MAIN ST. Blouses Petticoats Nothing enhances beauty like a becoming hat.

UNKNOWN DEAD IDENTIFIED New York Chief of Missing Persons Bureau Takes Lesson From Dry-as-Dust Anthropologist



CAPTAIN JOHN H. AYRES

BY NORRIS QUINN NEA Service Staff Writer.

NEW YORK, Nov. 14.—The dry-as-dust anthropologist, delving into forgotten strata and piecing together fragmentary bones of prehistoric monsters, today has turned teacher to the New York police.

His knowledge has been turned to practical account in the newest and most spectacular branch of police research—identifying unknown dead.

Six hundred unknown bodies are found yearly in the streets, alleys and waters of Greater New York. But through lessons learned from the anthropologist 87 per cent were identified beyond dispute in 1920, more than 86 per cent in 1921 and a larger proportion of successes, is looked for this year.

How It's Done Captain John H. Ayres, chief of the missing persons bureau of the New York police department, today told in an exclusive interview with NEA Service how he has accomplished his successes.

"If the corpse is complete and clothed, identification is comparatively simple," he says. "We examine the pockets for letters, documents, jewelry or keys."

"If these are lacking we turn to the clothes themselves. Usually there are teller marks in the better grade of clothing the name of the owner often is sewn in."

"Many bodies are identified by shoes. But the most valuable clothing clue is the laundry mark."

"When there is no clothing, we have to turn to the body itself. Are there distinguishing marks—scars or deformities? If not, the teeth are the most accurate—and usually an unerring—means of identification."

"But when a body, besides being unclothed, also is headless, the problem becomes intricate."

Anthropologist Steps In "It is there that the anthropologist steps in with the knowledge he has gained in reconstructing dinosaurs and pterodactyls from the most meagre fossil remains."

"Just as he would work with a fossil, he examines the pigment of the hair on the victim's body and tells us the color of the hair on the missing head—and sometimes he can tell us the color of the eyes, too."

"Taking a legless, armless and headless corpse, the anthropologist tells us the victim's height and weight. He examines the blood corpuscles and tells us the approximate age."

"Or, given only a thigh bone, he tells us the owner's sex, age, weight and height—if the owner was not of abnormal or grotesque proportions."

"Still more—from a featureless skull, the anthropologist can deduce the owner's age, sex and race and even make a good guess as to his nationality."

"All these things are being done—anthropology is being applied daily and it's yielding identifications that can't be disputed. It gets results when members of the dead person's family cannot identify the corpse."

"Let George Do It" Bring Your Diamonds in and let Me Mount Them While You Wait GEO. L. METZ 622 Main St.

WORK STARTS SOON ON NEW TEACHERS' COLLEGE AT S. F. SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 14.—Work starts here soon on the first units of the San Francisco Teachers' college which, authorities say, will be the finest structure of its kind in the United States.

Square Deal Drug Store 738 Main St. Phone 523. WEDNESDAY SPECIALS: Square Deal Cough Syrup 50c, Eagle Brand Milk 25c, Koche's Talcum 15c.

FACE TREATMENTS Cold weather, even more than hot summer days, works injury to the skin. It is during the first cold days of early winter that the greatest care should be taken to protect the face and hands.

SANTFORD & COMPANY 426 Main St. Klamath Falls, Oregon. We Originate Low Prices Others Endeavor to Follow Convince Yourself Watch Other Prices Change With Ours. List of products including tea, soap, flour, etc.