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IS IT IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT

There was a peculiar and therefore interesting case before the supreme court yesterday, in which the party most interested, J. D. Swank, is asking the court to give him his liberty. It seems Swank had been defendant in a suit before Judge McGinn, of Portland, in which the jury had awarded the plaintiff judgment against him for \$525, and costs amounting to \$28.25. Swank made affidavit that he did not have property of the value of \$20 over the legal exemptions.

Judge McGinn, however, reviewed the evidence, and believing Swank had property concealed for the purpose of defrauding his creditors ordered him imprisoned in the Multnomah county jail. His attorneys filed a motion asking the release of the prisoner and this being denied they appealed to the supreme court.

The case is of more than passing interest for Swank's attorneys take the position that he is being imprisoned for debt.

This brings up the question as to whether when a man has sworn he has no property, he can be held in jail. If so, how long can he be held, and in case he has told the truth and has no property will he have to stay in jail until he gets some? If a judge can keep him in jail at all on such a showing can he not keep him there for life?

Would not the proper remedy be for the parties to prove he had property concealed and then prosecute him for perjury? It may be suggested that the parties might not be able to prove this. In that case would not the judge be holding him in jail simply on suspicion?

What the decision of the supreme court may be, it is certainly an unusual proceeding and one fraught with danger to the liberty of American citizens. Another feature of the case is that if Swank should be set free he would have no redress even though he had been held a prisoner for years, for he could have no action against the judge, as such, and as the parties to the suit did not ask for his imprisonment he would have no claim against them. At the best, or worst, it is a dangerous precedent.

A BILLION BUSHELS OF WHEAT

That the United States grew nearly a billion bushels of wheat this year is the estimate of the department of agriculture. That is some wheat surely, but the mind cannot grasp the amount of it without some aid by which it can be put in more understandable form.

As the Minnesota mystery is cleared up, the munition plots grown tiresome, and politics not yet demanding the good citizen sit up of nights to keep track of them; a few minutes spent in "speculating in wheat" may not prove unprofitable.

A bushel standard measure contains 2150.42 cubic inches, and is just a trifle more than a cubic foot and one-fifth, which we will use for our "speculating."

A bushel of wheat would fill one foot and a fifth in length of a trough a foot wide and deep, and a billion bushels would fill such a trough for a distance of one billion two hundred million feet. Counting the distance around the earth as 25,000 miles this would be in feet, 132,000,000. It follows then that the wheat crop of this country this year, one billion bushels, would fill such a box reaching clear around the earth nine times, or would fill a box nine feet wide and a foot deep for that distance.

If this same crop was loaded into freight cars each holding 30 tons or 1,000 bushels, and these cars were each 40 feet long, it would take a double track from San Francisco to New York to hold them, for they would reach in a single line, a distance of 7,575 miles.

Made into five cent loaves of bread, it would give 1,000 loaves to every person in the United States and leave enough over to feed all the Belgians and Serbians besides.

The republican national press bureau, which is now furnishing the editorial matter for a majority of the G. O. P. newspapers of Oregon, sends out some very silly and trivial stuff in many instances. Here is a sample

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clipped from the Oregon City Enterprise: "From every section of the country, but principally from the northern and western states, come complaints of impaired rural mail service. In an effort to save the few thousands of dollars to make up part of the deficit brought on by democratic tariff legislation, the postoffice department is cutting the service not only in cities but in rural districts. The latest protest comes from Bristol county, Massachusetts, where mass meetings have been held to devise means of averting the destructive orders of the department. Residents of some towns find that under a recent order they must change their postoffice addresses, as they will henceforth reside on rural routes extending from cities other than those from which they have received mail for many years. Until all their correspondents learn of the changes, letters will go to the old address and be remailed, with a day's delay, at the least." When you come to think of it, isn't it absurd to try to make a national issue over some little local postal disturbance, due to changing of systems, in Michigan, Texas, or anywhere else. Such are occurring frequently in this country and always have, and they are soon remedied. Strange that this political press bureau can stir up no issue of real national import!

Salem druggists it is claimed will not sell any whiskey after the first of the year under any circumstances, and will handle alcohol with a difference and bashfulness hitherto unknown. The opinion of the attorney general is to the effect that if they sell alcohol, even though the party purchasing it makes the affidavit required by the law in such cases, and then happens to get soused on it, the druggists will be liable for the misuse of the dope. The druggists very wisely refuse to become responsible for what another person may do when in the company of a jug of booze, for both the temptation and the liquor are strong, and man, especially man with a jug, is weak and liable to wobble from sobriety's straight and narrow path.

Now that it has been decided that Smythe is not Bartholomew, the Portland trunk murder mystery is as far from solution as it was when the body was discovered. It is a remarkable coincidence however, that William Smythe, who was arrested on suspicion at Cheyenne, should have fitted the description of the supposed murdered so closely. They looked alike, were the same age, weighed each about 220 pounds and each was a waiter by occupation.

The license has been procured, the minister selected to perform the ceremony and the date of the wedding is tomorrow. That is all anyone knows about the president's and Mrs. Galt's wedding, but that is enough; for the honeymoon and where they will spend it is their own little affair. One thing the women of the country are interested in has been disclosed, and that is that the bride's age is given in the license as 43.

A large number of the county attorneys of the state met in the attorney general's office today to discuss with him and each other the enforcement of the prohibition law going into effect on the birth of the new year. Quite a number of sheriffs were also in attendance at the meeting. They will go home wiser, and perhaps make the balance of mankind better. Who knows?

The mystery about the big steam freighter Minnesota resolved itself into nothing more serious than a lot of rotten boilers, coupled possibly with some equally rotten officials, who allowed her to go to sea in the condition she was in. Maybe the inspectors wanted to make Davy Jones a Christmas present.

Oregonians need not worry about the rather excessive rains of the past six weeks. It will be dry enough after the first of the year.



SENSE AND SENTIMENT

"This babe," the stern physician said, courageously, "were better dead; for life to it will be a curse, and to its parents something worse. It hasn't brains wherewith to think, its frame has every mortal kink, and suffering and shame and woe would be its heritage, I know. Therefore, I shall not try to save this misfit infant from the grave." You'd think we'd all applaud the doc, for putting up this line of talk; but lo, the sentimentalists, whose thought machines have maudlin twists, throw dornicks at his bulging brow, and chase him to the timber now. The sob squad rises in its wrath, consigns the doctor to the broth. "Far better let an infant grow, all kinds of ill and pain to know, to struggle through this vale of tears, with sightless eyes and flopping ears, with stunted mind and palsied frame, than interfere with nature's game." Forgetting, as they rant and rear, the doctor didn't interfere. Why persecute the dauntless doc? Why not improve the human stock? We are improving cows and hogs and sheep and hens, and even dogs, but any sort of runt will do, if it is human stock, say you. Perhaps, a dozen ages hence, we'll cultivate some common sense.



A Galley o' Fun!

THE CORRECT LENGTH.
Mrs. Dresser—Do you think this dress is long enough behind, Jack?
Mr. Dresser—Plenty! Any microbe that can escape that isn't worth catching.



THE LUNATIC.

Precisely what the trouble was eluded them at first. His costume was conventional; he seemed to be well-versed in all topics of the day, and in didactic speech. Announced his views as tho' he were the stonelet of the beach.

In base-ball and hand-ball and in foot-ball and croquet—He pointed out just what was what in no uncertain way.

For following the hounds he laid great stress on proper togs. With eloquence dilated on the breeds of fancy dogs.

Cycling and lawn tennis and the roped arena's lore

Came tripping from his tongue until his tongue would wag no more; But when it came to yachting and to rowing and to polo, He bobbed up quite serenely and resumed at once his solo.

That as they listened, breathless, for the climax—quick it came! He'd never heard of Varlon and he quite despised the game!

SEASONABLE PRECAUTION.

Danquo's ghost would not down. "Who," whispered Macbeth uneasily, "is the party in the sheet?"

But Lady Macbeth laughed at his fears. "That? Why, that's most like some gent who was afraid if he came to dinner in a clawhammer he'd be mistaken for a waiter!" she rejoined lightly.

RARE.

Willis—He is the most wonderful man I know.
Gillis—Indeed. How so?
Willis—Before he got his machine he promised the usual number of people that he would take them riding, and he actually kept his word with all of them!

HOW IT HAPPENED.

First Citizen—I had attended der political meetings of bot' parties for der past ten years.
Second Citizen—Ah; You like to hear both sides?
First Citizen—Nein! I belong to a pruss pand!

VILLAINOUS.

She buried her face in her hands. But the villain, so far from being affected by the sight, could jest horribly.
"If she buried it in the garden she couldn't dig it up so easily!" he ejaculated.

LITERAL.

"Pop, tell me some conundrums."
"Conundrums? Why, I don't know any conundrums, my son."
"Oh, yes, you do! I heard mother tell Aunt Mary the other day that you keep her guessing most of the time."

NO WONDER.

Doctor—You are considerably under weight, sir. What have you been do ing?
Patient—Nothing. But I am a re tired grocer, Doc.

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