

The Western Kansas World

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WAKEENEY KANSAS

People of many deficiencies always talk about their difficulties.

It is not a religious use of the imagination to have an imaginary religion.

The bars that blind men most effectively are within and not without.

It is easy to appreciate the points of a sermon when they are sticking the other fellow.

Something great has died in him whose heart can not be fired by heroic sacrifice.

Lightning is reported to have twice stricken a former St. Louis physician. Most of us anxiously await the first stroke.

In competition with several archaeological societies, J. Pierpont Morgan has acquired a remarkable Grecian scent box, which was unearthed at Brugg, in the canton of Aargau.

Sherman F. Denton, of the bureau of fisheries, has presented to the Agassiz museum, Harvard university, a valuable collection of Hawaiian fishes, representing 140 species.

An English paper expresses sympathy for the duchess of Connaught because a boy ran into her automobile and was killed. It would naturally have been less regrettable if the car had run into the boy with the same result.

Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Barry, acting chief of staff, has left Washington for Cheyenne, where he will join Secretary of War Taft, and together they will make inspections of several of the large western military posts, with a view of making selections for the establishment of brigade posts.

A French experimenter, named Vercler, has succeeded in keeping certain kinds of peonies more than three months in cold storage, with the flowers in fair preservation to the end of that period. Red and white China peonies, for some unknown reason, stood the long tests better than any other blossoms.

James J. Hill is to turn literary critic. Recently he offered \$8,000 to farmers writing the best essays on agricultural subjects. The essays have been reviewed by Prof. Thomas Shaw and Prof. Hooverstadt. Mr. Hill, however, requested that prizes be withheld and not finally awarded until he could peruse the essays.

A group of several engineers and capitalists, headed by William O. Weber, of Boston, believe they have revolutionized the industrial system by a new device utilizing the power of the tides so as to manufacture compressed air. A plant is about to be erected at South Thomaston, Me., to demonstrate the value of this invention.

Prof. Henry E. Armstrong, the distinguished London scientist, has joined Lord Kelvin in a protest against the proposition submitted to the British association that the production of helium from radium has established the fact of the evolution of one element into others. Prof. Armstrong says that no one has yet handled radium in sufficient quantities to be able to say precisely what it is.

Almost at the same time two different inventors in different places have announced their success with electrical devices for seeing at a distance. They are J. B. Fowler and William H. Thompson. In Fowler's device four wires are required to accomplish the combined effect of distant vision and hearing. Details of the operation are withheld, however, on the plea of getting out a patent. Each inventor has adopted the name "Teleview."

California had some big calamities this year. She has also had big crops. Her mineral products alone have been exceptional, being valued at \$43,000,000, of which \$19,000,000 represented gold and \$9,000,000 petroleum. But her greatest wealth is in her grain and fruit, and the yield this year has been phenomenal. With such prosperity it will not take long to far more than counterbalance the ruin wrought at San Francisco, serious as was that calamity.

Is there nothing which the microscope regards as sacred? It has been a prevailing belief that the fresh-laid egg was the perfection of pure and healthful food. But here come some scientific disturbers of our peace of mind to warn us that the fresh-laid egg is dangerous—that it may have become inoculated with micro-organisms which are a menace to health. Really, this seems to be carrying things a little too far. If confidence in the integrity of the hen and the purity of newly-laid "hen fruit" be destroyed, to what may we pin our faith?

Curiosity sometimes proves fatal. A new railroad line was opened in Ecuador by an American company. To the natives the cars were objects of great interest, and one of them, ignorant of the mechanism, tampered with a brake, as a result of which the car and seven persons were killed. Guilelessness of that sort is too likely to have tragic consequences.

When a girl falls in love she begins to read poetry and when a man falls in love he begins to figure on whether he can afford it.

FIGHTS FOR LARGE ESTATE

John Armstrong Chanler Seeks to Regain Control of Fortune Amounting to More Than One Million Dollars.

PLAINTIFF'S SANITY IS IN QUESTION

Extraordinary Life Story of the Former Husband of the Princess Troubetskoi, Who Is Legally Sane in Virginia, Legally Insane in New York, and Who Writes a Startling Narrative of His Struggles for Liberty and an Inheritance.

New York.—Can a man be sane in one state and insane in another? So it would seem. But John Armstrong Chanler, cousin of the Astors, chum of the late Stanford White, college graduate, student of psychics and ex-husband of that brilliant, erratic woman, Amelie Rives, now the Princess Troubetskoi, is not going to take such a decision as final.

Next month his case comes up in the federal courts here in New York. Mr. Chanler, who has a fortune of \$1,000,000, wants to get control of it. But the courts of New York say he is insane and not competent. His legal residence is in the state of Virginia.

And there the courts have decided that he is perfectly sane and able to manage his estate.

There are forty-five states in the Union. Mr. Chanler can visit forty-four of them without the slightest danger to his personal liberty. But should he set foot in the sovereign state of New York he will promptly be clapped into a lunatic asylum, because he is still held to be mentally incompetent.

It will be a desperate legal battle. Mr. Chanler has retained the best of counsel. So has the custodian of his \$1,000,000, T. T. Sherman, who says he is insane. It is very much like Charles Reade's "Very Hard Cash" all over again.

It will be more than a legal fight. It will be a trial in which a man who has delved deep into psychic phenomena will try to prove that he is not insane just because he knows something more than the mere everyday things of life. Because a man is possessed of an X-faculty, Mr. Chanler contends, does not prove him mentally incompetent. Because he has solved the mystery of "graphic automatism" does not prove him a lunatic.

Writing of Fiction Outdone.

One might search fiction high and low for a case like this one in real life.

It is one of the most remarkable stories of modern times. Here is a man of independent means, a man of affairs, a brilliant writer, an ardent sportsman, a clever raconteur, sent to



Walked Well and Far.

Bloomington, adjudged hopelessly insane—"progressive" the physicians called his case.

His estate is handed over to a trustee. It is charged \$100 a week for the poor fellow's keep in the madhouse. Every legal detail has been properly arranged. The alienists give their expert opinions—his mind is gone, they say, circumstantially, never to return.

There he stays for nearly four years. He knows it is hopeless to protest. Here he is, behind the bars, gone from the world forever. He dreams of freedom by night; by day he ponders over the problem of getting it.

He waits his time. He gets the trust of everyone about him. He does meekly everything that he is bidden—everything except admit to the doctors, who want him to admit it, that he is insane. He gets permission to take walks without a keeper. He is allowed to leave the asylum grounds. He makes his daily jaunts farther and farther away, deliberately practicing the art of covering great distances in a short time. He finds a post office where he may receive letters under an assumed name because nothing may reach him at the asylum until it has been scrutinized. In this way

he manages to borrow \$10—this man with an income of \$40,000 a year.

One day he does not return from his daily walk. No, he has walked well and far—he has taken a train to New York from an obscure railway station miles distant from White Plains, where Bloomington now is. By nightfall he is safe in Philadelphia.

And now what does he do? Does he go into paroxysms of impotent rage at those who incarcerated him, as do many of the insane when they escape? Does he try to kill those whom he might imagine responsible for his sufferings? Does he break out in incoherent ravings against fancied evils?

Under Scientific Observation.

No. He goes straightaway to a sanitarium in Philadelphia. He states his case calmly to the physician in charge and asks to be put under scientific observation. After six months' voluntary confinement there the physicians there tell him that he is perfectly sane and has always been so. He is not even now content. He goes to another institution and goes through the same voluntary process all over again. Once more the physicians tell Mr. Chanler he is well balanced. Then suddenly he appears at his old home, Merry Mills, Cobham, Va., where he has stayed to this day, master of his ancestral estates.

Once safely home, this so-called lunatic retained counsel. The matter of his sanity was brought up in the Virginia courts and then there John Armstrong Chanler was pronounced sane and competent. But the greater part of his fortune was here in New York state, and here it is on record that John Armstrong Chanler is a hopeless lunatic. Should he come here he would be deprived of his liberty. And that is why he is suing in the United States court in the hope of winning back his inheritance and his standing as a man of sound mind.

And why was John Armstrong Chanler, Columbia '83, called insane? Because, as the physicians said, he had delusions—at least some of them said so.

They called him a hypochondriac—a person who thinks he is always ill. As a matter of fact he did have spinal trouble and gout. He took to vegetarianism to get rid of his gouty condition. He got well. Today he eats nothing but dry bread, well sprinkled with salt, with an occasional piece of cheese, and sometimes ice cream or candy. This is given as a symptom that he is insane.

Those who committed him to a living grave declared that he had Shakespeare's power, and could make himself Napoleon by going into a trance. That he was possessed of the power of "graphic automatism" and had developed his X-faculty—type of subconsciousness—was taken as another evidence of insanity.

Yet some of the most prominent psychological writers discuss this X-faculty in all seriousness and admit that there is such a thing as "graphic automatism." And all of this is told in a remarkable book which Mr. Chanler has just published.

He calls it "Four Years Behind the Bars of Bloomington; or, The Bankruptcy Law in New York." In it he is extremely bitter toward his two brothers, William Astor Chanler and Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler. He calls Bloomington "The Bastle of the 400" and asserts very positively that it is an easy matter to put anyone behind the bars forever as insane, just as Reade contended in his "Very Hard Cash."

Married to Amelie Rives.

John Armstrong Chanler first came into the public eye when he married Amelie Rives, who wrote that brilliant erotic "The Quick or the Dead," in which is told the old love of a beautiful widow for her dead husband and her newer love for another man in the flesh. Jock Dering, the hero, was Chanler.

Miss Rives was denounced by some persons as a rather imprudent writer, but that didn't keep her book, which appeared in 1886, from having a tremendous sale. Her marriage to young Mr. Chanler only added to its popularity. She was beautiful, erratic, impetuous. Soon their friends came to realize that there was nothing in common between the grave, polished, rather mystic New Yorker and the wilful, gifted Virginia girl.

There was a divorce, which the husband did not contest, upon the grounds of incompatibility and the Mrs. Chanler that was married Prince Troubetskoi, whom she had met abroad.

"The more I know men the more I admire dogs," is the way Mr. Chanler

opens his book, quoting from Voltaire. And here is the way he begins: "Stop thief! I hereby raise the hue and cry—stop thief."

"The above extraordinary announcement is called forth by the cold, hard facts about to be collected.

And his excuse for the book is this: "Now the sole and only object on earth in bringing out this book at this time is a desperate, forlorn hope upon the part of plaintiff to bring the crime that is being attempted against plaintiff's property to the ear of the court that appointed said referee, in order that said court may prevent said crime by setting aside the iniquitous decision, as above foreshadowed, of said referee."

Complaints of Injustice.

The book recites with bitterness what the writer calls the injustice of the proceedings leading up to the judgment of the New York courts and to his incarceration in Bloomington.

How Stanford White got him to Bloomington is told in this wise:

"I received a telegram from my friend, Mr. Stanford White, proposing to visit me in company with a mutual friend. As I was on rather unfriendly terms with Mr. White at the time, owing to an abusive letter he had recently written me, I did not look forward to a visit from him with pleasure. I therefore sent him a telegram to say that I was not well enough to see him. A few days later Mr. White walked in on me in company with a physician. I shall not attempt to picture my surprise. Let it suffice to say that I was struck dumb.

"Mr. White hastily excused his intrusion and implored me to accompany him to New York for a 'plunge in the metropolitan whirl.' As I had some business which needed my attention in New York I consented."

Of New York Mr. Chanler says: "In other words, a citizen of the state of New York can be condemned and imprisoned without a hearing. All that is required to deprive a citizen of the Empire state of his liberty is one or two false witnesses, two dishonest doctors and a judge who can swallow sworn conflicting statements without a qualm. No defense is allowed to the accused.

"This is truly the Empire state. I sometimes wonder, as I look through the bars of my cell, how such things can be outside the Russian empire.

Calls on Virginia for Rescue.

"Fortunately for myself, however, I am no longer a citizen of the Empire state, but am and have been since 1895 a citizen of the sovereign state of Virginia; which title to sovereignty I propose to see Virginia make good by rescuing me."

"Graphic automatism" he defines thus:

"In a word, the writing is, as the name implies, automatic. So far—but so far only—as conscious thought, i. e., conscious mental action is concerned, the hand does the writing without the help of the head. In other words, it is as though one had a magic pen—or pencil, since a pencil is smoother and easier to operate than a pen—that started out to write so soon as the operator took it into his or her hand.

"The operator has no more inkling of what the next word will be before the said magic pen has written same than the onlooker.

"All the operator has to do is to hold the pen firmly in the fingers, dip same into the ink, and see that said graphic automatism. After writing said letter, said graphic automatism will write ad libitum for plaintiff; plaintiff must see to it that the pen is not allowed to wander off the line." This Napoleonic trance is vouched

for by a physician. Mr. Chanler thus describes it: "In communicating with my 'X-faculty' by means of vocal automatism, which is also one of my trance-like states, I was informed by my 'X-fac-

ulty' that it would like me to go into a Napoleonic trance. It gave me to understand that I would represent the death of Napoleon Bonaparte by so doing, and that my features, when my eyes were closed, and face, would resemble strongly those of the dead Napoleon Bonaparte. This was in February, 1897, upon or shortly after my arrival at the Hotel K., New York city.

"My 'X-faculty' did not tell me what to do in order to produce the so-called Napoleonic trance; it merely informed me that when the time came it would instruct me what to do to produce the said trance. The distinguished sculptor, Mr. S. G., called at the Hotel K., shortly after my arrival, while I was in bed and in the evening my X-faculty gave me to understand, without Mr. S. G. knowing it, that it would be the proper time for me to enter the Napoleonic trance; I was interested myself from a scientific point of view to know just what I would do in a trance.

"Mr. S. G. expressed keen interest in seeing me in a trance. I then took under the direction of my 'X-faculty' a



Hopeless to Protest.

small hand mirror, which I used for shaving, in both my hands, and holding it rigidly above my head stared at my eyes for several moments without any result. I did not know but what the experiment was about to prove abortive and ridiculous; it was one of the most daring experiments I ever entered, for that reason. After a minute or two of complete passivity and rigidity, for the first time in my life I experienced the entrance to a trance.

And of Bloomington thus: "Bloomington," is may as well be admitted first as last, is run purely for money, purely on business principles, and not on charitable ones. A candidate for a certificate of lunacy is requested by his masters therein—the said examining doctors—to stand up and then deliberately to throw himself off his balance by putting his feet so close together, toes and heels touching, that one's equilibrium is menaced. He is then commanded to extend his arms to their fullest extent, hands outstretched palms upward and close together. He is then ordered to open his mouth, put out his tongue and shut his eyes.

"If he does not fall down on the spot he is lucky. It is while in the

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Sweet Thoughts.

An Atchison father is very much disgusted. He recently bought his daughter a \$75 gold watch, and she isn't as pleased with it as she was with a box of chocolates a young man sent her. The watch from her father means nothing, but the chocolates seem to mean enough to cause her to sit and look out into the dark and think, and think, hours at a time.—Atchison Globe.

In the Shade of the Sphinx.

The Egyptian pyramids will probably lose much of their magnificent and legendary appearance in the near future. The Egyptian government has given permission for the erection of homes and hotels in the vast plain stretching from Eskebich to the Nile and covered with the ancient sphinxes and structures. Already several societies have been formed to avail themselves of the picturesque view for the building of large hotels. All around the pyramids of Ghiseh there are to be erected real American skyscrapers from nine to ten stories in height.



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