

THE GREAT NORTHWEST

Topics of General Interest in the New States and Elsewhere.

A Tourist Drops Dead in the National Park—The Strike at the Horr Coal Mines Remains Unsettled.

MONTANA.

William Mulaney and six other men have sheared 20,000 sheep since June 9.

The city of Livingston has voted to bond for \$12,000 for the erection of a city building.

Forest fires are raging the vicinity of Ming's coulee and Tiger butte, Cascade county.

The amount of wool received at the Glendive warehouse this season is 340,000 pounds.

The population of Great Falls, according to the census count, is 4,157, and that of Cascade county is 8,300.

The Michigan Press association, amply supplied with cameras, are taking in the sights at the National park.

A representative of the St. Paul Pioneer Press had his pockets picked of \$85 and a number of diamonds at Cinnabar one day last week.

James M. Ryan of Helena died suddenly Friday morning of heart failure.

Mr. Ryan was one of the most noted pioneers of Montana having an intimate acquaintance with nearly every old timer in the territory since 1862.

He owned considerable property in Helena and his estate is valued at \$250,000. Mr. Ryan was a lifelong democrat and was an active and influential party worker.

Guy R. Pelton, a tourist of New York, dropped dead in the National park Thursday.

He was one of a party of eight who were going up St. Mary's mountain. He complained of not being able to get his breath after they had proceeded a short distance and a little later dropped and expired in a few moments.

It is supposed the high altitude and lightness of the air was the cause of his death, as upon examination it was found that blood vessels in the region of the heart had been ruptured.

Mr. Pelton was for two terms a congressman from New York city. This is the second tourist who has dropped dead in the park this season.

The strike at the Horr coal mines still continues with no prospect of settlement.

A meeting of the directors of the company was held at Livingston Thursday but no conclusion was reached concerning what action the company will take.

The present strike at Horr dates from about the first of June, when the miners first struck on account of not receiving their wages on pay day.

The company then reduced the scale of wages from \$1.25 to \$1.10 per ton. The men then struck again and have remained out ever since.

The company are at a big loss, as their 40 ovens have been closed down and they have been compelled to cancel large contracts which they had on hand at the time of the strike.

The managers of the company expect the men to return to work in a few days, but the members of the K. of L., who have convened with the strikers, claim that they will never return to work at the present rate of wages.

One of the most unique pre-historic relics we have ever seen was left on exhibition at this office last week by Wm. Totterdale, of Birch creek. It is a stone mortar or bowl and was picked up on his premises.

It is shaped something like ancient pottery, is about seven inches in height, three inches across the base, six inches across the rim the long way and five the other way, and the cavity is six inches deep.

The stone is a kind of mica granite, but is hard and smooth-cut, especially on the inside. A ledge of this kind of stone has been found in the vicinity of where the vessel was found.

As history gives us no account of any race using such vessels we are forced to conclude it belongs to some early date of the world. This, with the excavations near John Moore's ranch gives abundant evidence of a race of different habits from those of the North American Indians whom the whites found in possession of the country.

White Sulphur Springs Husbandman.

WASHINGTON.

Ellensburg will soon have a thoroughly organized fire department.

The Skagit Logger reports that considerable prospecting is being done in the mountains this summer.

An ice factory is to be erected in the Wishka river near Aberdeen, by H. W. Frazer, late of Salt Lake.

The Kalama Bulletin proposes to organize a company to explore the country surrounding the headwaters of the Kalama river.

According to the Tribune the town of Orting, with two newspapers, has neither bank, blacksmith, insurance agent, jeweler, meat market nor laundry.

The examination of Julia Glenn, the colored woman charged with arson at Spokane Falls, was held Friday.

The evidence failed to prove the guilt of the defendant and she was discharged.

The English syndicate fiend has attacked the quiet but prosperous little city of Walla Walla. Mrs. J. H. Stahl's brewery falls into his hands at the price of \$150,000. The foreigners take charge at once.

THE REIGN OF COMEDY.

Written for the SUNDAY STANDARD.

Among the managers of Eastern opera houses there is now a general agreement to push comedy during the next season, and to suppress tragedy.

The repertoire of leading eastern opera houses has appeared, these show rather few tragedies signed for next season.

The old school classical will have few opportunities to re-perpetrate the crimes of Lady Macbeth or to terrorize a house with the fatal jealousy of Othello.

The lovers of Shakespeare will for the most part have to content themselves with such tamer passions as the greed of Shylock or with such bloodless plots as those of Rosalind.

Of course Booth will still be seen as Hamlet, and Fanny Davenport will continue to freeze her houses with the grisly horrors of La Tosca.

But such tragedians and tragediennes as appear in the houses playing first-class attractions, will be more than usually excellent.

Those of mediocre ability will be forced to study comedy or to find a place other than the stage to exercise their talents.

As everyone knows, the managers are not undertaking this movement for the good of the people but for the good of themselves.

They are attempting to work no reform in the tastes of American theater-goers, but they are trying to meet what they believe to be a change which has already taken place.

In their judgment, the tide of public opinion has at last set in strongly against tragedy and equally strongly in favor of comedy.

As evidence of the truth of this, they point to the thin houses which greet the average tragedian as compared with the full houses which a comedian of really less relative ability can draw to-day.

"It requires a Keen to get Richard III. a respectable audience to-day," said a well known New York manager to the writer, "but I can pack my house without a Goodwin if 'Natural Gas' or 'Our Flat' is on the bill."

Indeed, upon studying the repertoire of the past season, one can see that the change from less tragedy to more comedy is no new movement after all, but only the furtherance of a change already begun.

Some of us who have sat through night after night of insipid attempts at humor on the part of bedizened coxswains, anxiously longing for the relief which a great star must bring, have been impressed with the fact that the comedy is the popular form of play to-day and is the best and perhaps only field where any but a great actor can hope to make his bread.

While this feeling against tragedy and in favor of comedy may be general, it certainly is not universal.

A very respectable minority of theater attendants are not prepared for the change and are vigorously protesting against it.

The lovers of tragedy are still numerous if somewhat less so than they were a few years ago. In their dissatisfaction with the present drift of theatrical opinion, they are very bitter in their denunciation of the American public.

They characterize the feeling in favor of comedy as the creature of vulgarity and unintelligence, as one of the concomitant evils of foreign immigration.

Our majorities and our masses, they say, are coming to be every year made up more and more of the dregs of European civilizations.

The change is in the masses and not in the individuals. The old lovers of tragedy can no more be brought down to the level of comedy, they say, than can the lovers of comedy be brought up to the level of tragedy.

To those, who are by their prejudices disposed to believe it, this sort of reasoning usually appears quite a satisfactory explanation of the tendency in favor of comedy.

A partial explanation is undoubtedly in the apparent change in public credit for all the apparent change in public credit. He who leans on this reasoning will meet with some shocks.

He will meet with cultivated people, who, having seen the best tragedians and tragediennes still declare against tragedy. Such cases can neither be attributed to vulgarity nor to prejudice, and in order to meet them the incautious thinker must find a new explanation.

And the reason is not so hard to find. A little observation at any strongly presented tragedy will show one the dangers of it.

The writer remembers having been once both astonished and annoyed to hear a lady of undoubted culture and character insist upon leaving an opera house during a masterly reading of Richelieu by Thomas W. Kean.

Kean was more than usually powerful that night, and led his audience on and on, breathless and motionless until where the curtain fell on "the curse of Rome," the pent up feeling of his house broke out in deafening applause.

A strange point to leave a play one would say, and yet not so strange. The tension of a strongly acted tragedy upon the sensibilities and affections is often greater than one thinks until he finds on leaving the opera house that he is thoroughly unstrung and exhausted.

Excitement so strong as scarcely to be felt twice in a lifetime, becomes a weekly occurrence to the regular attendant upon tragedy.

It may be well to ask here, what we seek at a tragedy, anyway? "Pleasure" nine out of ten will answer. But he who has carefully studied his feelings in that last dreadful act of "Othello," on hearing the star pronounce the sad soliloquy of him who "loved not wisely but too well," will not call his feelings pleasurable.

The remorse of the unfortunate Moor produces a grief which, at the time, is as real as grief can be. On carefully studying his feelings during the performance of strong tragedy, one is forced to the conclusion that it is not pleasure but excitement that one seeks at the tragedy.

Lovers of tragedy are not so much pleasure seekers as excitement seekers. The lovers of the comedy are among theatre attendants the only true pleasure seekers.

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