The Spokane Press

Published Every Evening Except Sunday

SCRIPPS NEWS ASSOCIATION PRESS SERVICE.

One cent per copy, six cents per week, twenty-five cents per month or $3 per year, delivered by carrier. No free copies.
Subscribers will confer a favor by promptly reporting all cases of poor or tardy delivery to the office.

616 Front avenue. Telephone Main 375. Postoffice Box 4. | Entered at Spokane, Wash., as second class matter.

Eastern office: 53 Tribune building, New York City. Chicago office: 806 Hartford building. W. H. Porterfield, manager of foreign advertising.

Is She Morally Guilty?

Perhaps you may say this story properly belongs to the news columns. Possibly. But the story raises some questions that cannot properly be discussed in a news way and the question cannot be raised save by telling the story.

* * *

The first chapter opens in a little Italian village near Naples. There is a sweet, modest girl named Rosa. Two young men, James DiPietro—a rather frail young fellow with a big heart—and Michael Rigo—a big fellow but shiftless—are rivals for the hand of the girl. DiPietro is loving and constant while Rigo is jealous, unforgiving and passionate. DiPietro wins and marries Rosa. When the neighbors come to the wedding to make merry Rigo will not come. In a jealous rage he marries another girl of the village.

* * *

Di Pietro and his young wife come to New York. He works hard and Rosa is a good wife. Three children are born to them. Two of them die and the parents are drawn still closer together. When other men, after the manner of compatriots, drop into the home while the husband is at work and say, "Come, Rosa, get the chianti and let us have a god time," she says, "I have work to do. Wait till my husband comes home and then we will have chianti, if he says so." It is plain that she loves only her husband. And the two with little Catharina, sit at night and plan how little Catharina will some day go to school in one of the big school buildings.

* * *

Enter Rigo. After a few years he deserts his wife and children and comes to New York. He uses every wile to corrupt Rosa Di Pietro. Resenting his advances she fears to tell her husband lest Rigo in his great strength might kill him. Finally she tells her husband and begs him to say nothing and move to another neighborhood. They move. Rigo follows. He hires a room next door. Again and again they move. Rigo follows. The last time he rents a room on the floor beneath them and they know he is desperate. Then the husband gives the wife a revolver to protect herself.

* * *

One day last week this Rigo came to Rosa's room and locked the door behind him. He held his big tailor's shears threateningly. The woman saw the brute would stop at nothing. As he advanced she shot him dead. She was arrested and taken, with little Catharina in her arms, to the prison where she was locked up on the charge of murder.

* * *

Now. The telling of this story is for the purpose of asking these questions: Did Rosa Di Pietro murder this man? Ought she to go to the electric chair for killing Michael Rigo? Ought she to be punished for committing this act, an act she does not deny, and which she says was done to protect her woman's honor?

* * *

Did this woman or did she not, do what any woman who holds her honor above her life would do under like circumstances? Is she morally guilty. The law says she has committed murder and must be punished. But is there not an unwritten law that has come down to us from the ages that rates a woman's virtue above the life of a lustful brute? Is there not a higher law—a law written in the heart of a woman—a law above the statute books, that condones a so-called crime committed in righteous self defense? Let the heart of woman answer.

Health in Song

London doctors have announced the discovery that vocalism is the healthiest of professions.

Anemic boys and girls of England are now being ordered to take singing lessons, because they do not know how to breathe properly and the singing master teaches them the art.

Very few people, it is said, utilize the whole of their lung power when they breathe, but get into a lazy habit of merely gasping or breathing superficially.

Translate the salutary shrieks of infancy into the educated singing of maturity, and the net result is the same—a large increase of health and comeliness.

There is satisfaction in knowing that a fretful baby that often gives way to tantrums and shrieks is cultivating health and that when its sweet little voice is raised in a piercing cresendo of screams its lungs are expanding, the blood is circulating well and it is gaining strength and beauty momentarily.

After the anemic girl with the broad shoulders and the contracted chest has taken a dozen singing lessons her back begins to flatten and her chest to develop. Her complexion freshens and she notices with pleasure a rose tint reddening her cheeks.

Candidates for the army whose chest measurement lacks the requisite number of inches are taking singing lessons to increase their girth, or, if their voices lack the musical element, they attend breathing classes and learn where their respiration should come from—that is to say, how they should draw each breath, how long they should retain it and how emit it.

There may be scoffers who will doubt and question the practicability of results, but a London medical journal is good authority.

Besides it is well known that the professional songstress retains the freshness of youth into old age, not entirely as a result of the general care she takes of her health and the excellent food she eats for the sake of her voice, but mainly because she breathes perfectly and exercises her lungs regularly.

It is acting on this theory that middle-aged English women inclined to embonpoint now take breathing lessons at a fashionable school in south Kensington, where waists are coaxed back to figures long devoid of them and new vigor is given to the aging physique.

Unfortunately, all cannot hope to sing—or maybe, fortunately; but all can learn to breathe properly, and the good results, even when stripped of all exaggeration, are not to be despised.

Instant death came to a loop-the-gap bicycle rider in Illinois. This, as you will readily see, makes room for another loop-the-gap bicycle rider.

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A MATTER OF HEALTH

ROYAL

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THE STORY OF LIAO YANG

By Will H. Brill.
Newspaper Enterprise Association.
(Continued.)

FIELD HEADQUARTERS SECOND CORPS IMPERIAL JAPANESE ARMY, Sept. 1.—The battle of Shansam-po was won last night. It was won by a brigade although there were divisions engaged. It was won by a comparatively few men and of those few more than half lie stark and cold upon the field today. The battle was won in the charge upon the center of the Russian position, the charge on what we have called Green hill for want of a better name.

Green hill is the center of the position and it is one of the nastiest positions troops were ever sent to take. The hill is perhaps 200 feet high and it rises from the plain in a gentle slope followed by a very steep rise. The Russians had this hill strongly fortified with three lines of trenches. All day yesterday the Japanese lay at the foot of this hill in trenches which they had hastily thrown up during the night. Last night they charged—and they took the hill. That it was one of the most desperate charges imaginable everyone who has seen the hill today knows.

The strongest line of defenses on the hill were those at the very top. We knew that yesterday and the day before; we have seen them today and that has only verified our previous opinion. For two days the Japanese artillery played on these trenches with little apparent effect. While the artillery was firing on the trenches the soldiers were not there. They were safely ensconced in the bombproofs in the rear playing cards and drinking vodka. But when the charge came they were there and they fought like demons.

Took Hill at Night.

Last night the men of Nagoya were sent to take the hill. These soldiers who have done splendid work all the way north from Nanshan hill had been lying in the trenches at the foot of the hill all day. The order came for them to take the hill and—well, they took it.

In command of the brigade which took the hill was Major General Kodama. We met the general on the hill this afternoon. He shook hands with all of us and gave us his card. He posed for a photograph without objection. He smiled all the time he talked to us, through our interpreter, by the way. I tried to get General Kodama to tell me the story of that charge.

"We were ordered to take the hill and we took it," he said.

"Wasn't it pretty hard fighting?" I suggested.

"Oh, yes, but we expected that."

Not another word could I get out of him.

We had seen the hill and we had seen the trenches, a description of the fight was not necessary. We knew what it had been.

The first line of trenches which the Nagoya men were sent to take were about half way up the hill. They took them, but at a cost that it is even now hard to estimate. Starting from the shelters at the foot of the hill where they had been all day lying in the little shallow holes which they had dug with their bayonets or sheltered behind the scores of conical Chinese graves which cover the plain, they went up the first easy slope of the hill at a rush without stopping to fire.

Fought Hand to Hand.

The fire from the Russian trenches was terrific and every step of the upward course was marked by the death of a soldier. But they kept on until the trenches were reached and then fought the Russians hand to hand, driving them out of the trenches at the point of the bayonet. The loss at this trench was something appalling, but it did not stop the onward rush of the conquering Japanese. Across the trench they went treading on the mangled bodies of friends and foes that filled the trench to overflowing and on they went up the now steep sides of the hill to the main trenches on the crest. The bullets rained down that hillside like hail but they did not stop the desperate uprush of those brave little soldiers. Hundreds of them fell, but on they went to the very edge of the trench where, with bayonets and clubbed muskets, they struggled desperately until they won the trench. When we reached the hill this morning the bodies had not been moved from the trenches. There they lay, Japanese and Russians in inextricable confusion as they fell in that bloody hand-to-hand fight.

Enemies Embrace in Death.

In several cases Japanese and Russians lay actually in each others' arms. Death had been dealt out in every conceivable form. Bullets had done their work, scores of lives had escaped through ghastly bayonet wounds and here and there a skull had been crushed by clubbed musket. Again we saw war in all its horror.

And then we heard that among the victims of that terrible charge was an old friend, Major Tachibana. He was the officer who took us to his quarters and gave us tea and beer and little candy hearts with mottoes on them. I stood uncovered beside his dead body today. His servant stood by and told us the story, the tears running down his face the while. The major had been on duty at headquarters in the commissariat but he had been relieved at his own request to take active service with his battalion.

When the charge was ordered, Major Tachibana led his battalion, the sword of his ancestors in his hand. Up the hill he went through that awful storm of bullets, cheering on his men. Twice he met Russian officers [illegible] the interest because it explains why the Japanese need all their bravery. The courage of the Japanese soldier has been proven beyond all question in this war and this same Japanese soldier would be the last person in the world to deny the same quality to his enemy.

We saw the final act of the story this afternoon, the first act occurred yesterday. I have told how, after a most desperate charge, the Japanese drove the Russians out of the trench at the point of Scrub hill and occupied it themselves after a charge in the face of rifle and shrapnel fire that cut great gaps in their ranks. The Russians, it was believed, were all driven out of the trench. But this was not the case. Hardly had the Japanese settled themselves in the trench before there was a crack from a rifle in one end of it and a Japanese soldier fell dead. This was followed by another and another shot and several Japanese died before it was discovered where the shots came from.

In a Miniature Fortress.

Finally it was found there was a hole, the entrance to what had evidently been an ammunition magazine. It was from this hole the shots had been fired. Careful investigation showed that several Russian soldiers had taken refuge there. They were called upon to surrender, but refused to do so and answered all further demands with shots. The Japanese could not reach the Russians in the hole without exposing themselves to certain death before they could fire, and after several unavailing attempts to make the Russians evacuate their position, they simply covered the mouth of the hole with bags of sand from the breastworks and left the Russians to think the matter over. This morning two officers who spoke Russian had the bags taken away and again called on the Russians to surrender. The result was that one of the officers was killed and the other wounded.

It was shortly after noon yesterday when the Japanese took the trench. It was 3 o'clock this afternoon when the correspondents, making a tour of inspection of the hills, arrived at the spot. We were told that we were just in time to see something peculiar. One of the officers explained to us about the Russians who had been in the hole for 27 hours and said that they had just expressed to an interpreter a willingness to give themselves up.

Surrender to Face Camera.

As he spoke a soldier pulled away a bag of sand and through a crack between two bags a bayonet protruded. A Japanese soldier caught the gun that was thrust up on his own bayonet and pulled it out. A second gun followed and a third and finally six lay in the trench beside the hole. Then the sandbags were pulled away and the interpreter called out something in Russian. A moment later a flat cap appeared from the hole, followed by a shock of yellow hair, a red, pock-marked face and a figure clothed in a brownish gray overcoat. A dozen cameras were trained on the man in an instant. The Russian was half way out of the hole when a Japanese soldier touched him on the shoulder and signed for him to stop a moment until the battery of cameras had been discharged.

I shall not soon forget the look on that pock-marked face. There was no emotion there, nothing but a mild curiosity as the Russian looked into the cannon-like mouths of the cameras. The eyes were open wide and were staring and in them one could read the thoughts of the stolid brain behind them. If ever a man expected instant death and had nerved himself for it, this Siberian soldier was the man.

"Snapped, 55 But Life Spared.

But he wasn't killed. He was passed down into the trench and another was called out. This man was a hospital corpsman and wore the red cross on his sleeve. He did not look to right or left, but at once reached down to help out a comrade. The third man's head was covered with bloody bandages and he was evidently badly wounded. He staggered as he came out of the hole, and leaned heavily on his comrade for support. Two others, also wounded, followed, and then another red cross man. The Japanese were gentle with them, even when they were stopping them one after another to give the anxious correspondents and their cameras a chance. After the men were all out they were lined up and a final rattle of camera shutters ended the play, so far as we were concerned.

The wounded Russians were at once removed to the nearest field hospital, where they were given the very best of care. The unwounded are being taken to the rear as prisoners of war.

(To Be Continued.)

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