

# NEBRASKA IN BRIEF

NEWS NOTES OF INTEREST FROM VARIOUS SECTIONS.

## ALL SUBJECTS TOUCHED UPON

Religious, Social, Agricultural, Political and Other Matters Given Due Consideration.

Hastings will soon have one of the finest auditoriums in the state. Mr. Hatyer, proprietor of the Edison theater in that city, is just finishing a new building which will be amply large to accommodate Hastings audiences.

If the decision recently handed down by the supreme court is of the scope the lawyers in Central City believe Chapman is likely to be without a saloon shortly and Merrick county will be entirely without saloons, save for the one at Silver Creek.

David Sherwood, ex-county commissioner of Thayer county, was found dead in a room in the Alexandria hotel. He had gone to the room to prepare for a trip and dropped dead of heart failure. Mr. Sherwood was one of the oldest residents of the county and was commissioner two consecutive terms during the time the \$75,000 court house was being built.

Farmers should all have telephones. Write to us and learn how to get the best service for the least money. Nebraska Telephone Company, 18th and Douglas streets, Omaha. "Use the Bell."

Mrs. R. A. Cottle sold her eighty acre farm near Colon in Saunders county to Charles Davis for \$9,000. Mrs. Cottle when a young woman got title to this land by preemption. She was a girl about twenty years of age then—fifty years ago this winter. Her maiden name was Rebecca Keeler and she was among the earliest settlers, having come to Saunders county in 1857.

The government inspector was called to Auburn to examine the cattle in the dairy herd of Nixon & Harris, and twenty-two head of the herd were pronounced affected with tuberculosis. These cattle had been separated from the cows that were giving milk for the trade, and had been kept in other pastures because of the fact that Harris & Sons had found that they were not doing well, though they had kept in good order in all cases.

Mrs. Mathilda Ruser and John Slager have been taken to the penitentiary at Lincoln to begin their terms of punishment for having plotted to kill Mrs. Ruser's husband, Emil Ruser of Sarpy county, as he lay asleep in bed. They both pleaded guilty and Mrs. Ruser was sentenced to one year and Slager to six years. They were taken to the Douglas county jail for safe keeping until Sheriff Spearman of Sarpy county was ready to take them to Lincoln.

Joseph Walter, against whom a complaint had been made on an insanity charge, sent word to Sheriff Sammons of Buffalo county that he would shoot if any attempt were made to take him. He purchased the gun and a good supply of ammunition, and when he was arrested in a crowd of Christmas shoppers he tried to carry out the threat, but was captured without difficulty and taken care of. Walter was released from the asylum only a few weeks ago.

Judge Guthe, prosecuting attorney for Custer county, was badly injured by being caught between two automobiles while driving in a buggy with his wife. He was taking the middle of the road, when the two machines, driven respectively by Messrs. Willing and Johnston, attempted to pass on either side. The horses took fright and made a quick turn and upset the buggy, throwing the occupants violently out. One ear was torn from the judge's head.

The First Christian church of Fremont will pay off all its indebtedness on New Year's day, when the annual meeting is held. It is enabled to do so by a "lift" it has been given by the trustees of a church which recently disbanded at Maple Creek. The Maple Creek church agreed to give the Fremont church the \$500 it had in its treasury for the purpose of paying off the church debt, provided an equal amount was subscribed in Fremont. It was announced in the church that the amount had been subscribed.

The State Board of Educational Lands and Funds made a bid for the Douglas county court house bonds, formally agreeing to take them in block at par or take them in such amounts as Douglas county commissioners may desire, with sixty days' notice. It is the understanding that Douglas county has an offer for the entire \$1,000,000 of bonds in a block, but the terms of the bid make it possible for the county board to sell the bonds, as it needs the money. The offer of the board will net the state 4 per cent.

Charles Cole, long a resident of Dawes county, committed suicide some time December 18 or 19 about three miles northeast of Chadron. He cut his throat with a razor from ear to ear.

Red Willow county furnishes a case of swift justice. Josiah S. Calvert robbed an intoxicated friend Saturday night, was arrested on Sunday, appeared in district court Monday and pleaded guilty and was sentenced to one year in the penitentiary, to which he was taken by the sheriff the same night. The amount involved was \$60. Calvert is 23 years old.

# Carlton Clarke's Zinc Case

By FRANK LOVELL NELSON

## Romance and Mystery Entwined in Master Mind's Coup

**"B**ODY Found in Trunk," began Clarke. "But I'll skip the headlines."

Upon opening a box which they had purchased at an uncalculated freight sale two young men residing in Austin were horrified yesterday to discover the body of a man. It was hermetically sealed in a zinc case which was inclosed in an ordinary round-topped trunk, which in turn was packed in sawdust within a fine dry goods box. Considering the fact that the box had remained for three years and a half in the freight warehouse, the body was in a remarkable state of preservation, due probably to the manner of packing it. There is no clue to the identity of the body other than that it was billed to a fictitious address on South Jefferson street and was shipped from Salt Lake City, having been rebilled there from Etteso, Wash.

"That's the gist of it, but, of course, after the fashion of your reporters the story is told from several angles in order to fill the column. It looks like a promising mystery."

"Yes, but one that probably is impossible of solution considering the length of time," I answered.

"I'm not so sure of that. Did it ever occur to you that any crime can be solved if someone is willing to expend money, time, and travel? Given unlimited resources, I believe I could organize a detective force which would make punishment a certainty for every criminal. Crime goes unsolved because the men capable of doing effective work can make more money in other lines. I'd rather like to look into this case. Does your influence extend to the county morgue?"

"Deputy Coroner McNally in charge there is one of my particular friends. I am sure he will favor us."

"Suppose we call there this afternoon, if your engagements will permit."

I acceded, but shortly after breakfast something arose that put the matter entirely out of our minds for the moment. I was busy at my own devices, and Clarke was deep in a very erudite work on oriental mysticism when there was a violent tug at our door bell. I opened the door and admitted a handsome, athletic young fellow, square of jaw and keen of eye, but apparently laboring under the most intense excitement.

"Where is Mr. Clarke? I must see him at once," he gasped.

Knowing Clarke's rule to see all callers when possible, I immediately ushered him into the library.

"Oh, Mr. Clarke," he began without awaiting an introduction. "I am sure I have a word from her. I must have your help. The police will laugh at me but I feel it is a clue. I shall go mad if it falls. I know she is living. I have never given her up."

"But calm yourself, my dear sir, and let me have your story connectedly," said Clarke. "Remember, I am ignorant even of your name."

"Pardon me, I forgot. I am so full of this new clue. My name is Richard Dudley."

He needed to say no more to Clarke or myself. The name recalled instantly the disappearance, six months before, of Evelyn Mason. The country had rung with it. The papers had been filled with it. The best detectives in the country had struggled with it. Clarke himself, though not called in by the family had taken a deep interest in the progress of the case. A note of romance had been added to the affair by the recently announced engagement of the iron magnate's daughter to Richard Dudley, Harvard's old crack half-back who, at the time she so mysteriously dropped out of sight, was traveling in the orient. He had hastened home as fast as steamer and train could carry him and had taken up the thread where the police had dropped it in despair.

"Then you have a clue, Mr. Dudley?" asked Clarke when he had assured our caller that his trouble was well known to us.

"I think so. Here is what I received this morning. I hurried to you at once."

And Dudley handed Clarke a slip of paper.

Clarke read the paper and handed it over to me. It contained but one word, "Osette," written in a sprawling hand.

"Where did you get this?" asked Clarke.

"It was slipped under my door last night. I have no idea by whom. I found it there this morning. Oh, Mr. Clarke, tell me that you have hope and that we will find her."

"What particular importance do you attach to this paper?"

"Oh, can't you see? But I forget. No one knows it but myself and her immediate family. Why, man! that's Evelyn's middle name! Evelyn Osette Mason. She never used it. No one knows it. Don't you see she must have sent this?"

"In that case, Mr. Dudley, you have indeed a most valuable clue; more val-

**Telepatho-Deductive Solver of Criminal Mysteries Tackles a Problem Embodying Smuggling, the Fearful White Plague, and Two Lovers Are Brought Together in Grand Finale—Solution of the Complex Puzzle.**



MY HANDS SHOT TO HIS THROAT.

uable, I trust, than you suspect. It will however take time and labor to develop it. I imagine it may take us to the Pacific coast. Are you prepared to take such a trip?"

"At once, if necessary. Oh! we shall find her, shan't we, Mr. Clarke?"

The body already had been prepared for burial, and Clarke did not ask to see it. The pine box he glanced at just long enough to read the fictitious address. The trunk also he passed with a look. When he came to the zinc case, however, it riveted his attention. He examined closely every seam and corner of it.

Clarke decided upon a trip to the Pacific coast.

When we finally reached the end of our long journey and succeeded in locating the town of Etteso, we found a little hamlet numbering about 500 souls. Across a snug harbor shone the broad expanse of the Pacific.

After some search we located the private sanitarium of Dr. Clinton Withersbee, a man known to Clarke to be a villain of the deepest dye. We entered a room in Withersbee's asylum.

What I have next to relate has been pieced together out of a blur of hazy

memories. I am not aware just when I lost consciousness. My first sensation was that some one was looking intently at the back of my head.

Then a soft, purring, voice said:

"Mr. Carlton Clarke, Mr. Richard Dudley and Mr. Paul Sexton, I believe; Dr. Withersbee is at your service."

When I awoke to consciousness some one was alternately snapping his fingers in my face and roughly shaking me. I was in pitchy darkness, and the air was chill and clammy.

"Sexton, I'm ashamed of you," said Clarke's voice through the gloom. "You are a particularly easy subject. I should have given you some lessons in resistance."

"Where are we? What has happened? Where is Dudley?" I asked, in a breath.

"Dudley is here. He recovered before you did," answered Clarke, a fact which Dudley's voice confirmed. "We seem to be in some sort of an oubliette, of that dear Dr. Withersbee."

In single file we made the round of our dungeon. We found it to be about 12 feet square, walled with masonry which dripped dampness, and floored with cement. On one side we came upon

a door the height of my head, I being the tallest of the party. From the rivet heads we judged it to be of plate steel and it closed into a steel frame set into the masonry in a manner which offered no entrance for the point of a pick had we had one at hand. The absence of any keyhole, bolt or lever showed that it was never intended to be opened from the inside.

At last, after a wait which seemed an eternity, I heard a soft footfall outside of the door. Then iron bars clanked and grated, I heard the hinges creak and the door swung slowly open. A dark form framed in the doorway was outlined through the gloom. Then it stepped into our midst. My hands shot to his throat, which was cold and clammy as that of a corpse. There was no resistance. I heard Dudley wrenching the lantern from his belt. At Clarke's command I released him. Dudley was about to strike the light when Clarke shouted: "Quick, Dudley; the door!"

We emerged on the rugged side of a hill overlooking the broad expanse of the bay.

Lying flat on my back on the sand, my heart tugging and thumping, my

breath coming in rasping gasps which seemed to sear my throat, I waited, I knew not how long.

At last I was aroused by a soft "hello," and the nose of a swift gasoline launch shot into the creek.

We had not long to wait. Clarke lifted his eyes from his intent watch on the shore line and said: "He's coming."

I knew who "he" meant and I shivered at meeting Withersbee on those black waters. Then my ear caught the "puff—puff" of a launch.

"Down in the boat, fellows, he's going to fire," shouted Clarke. Dudley and I dropped. Six times in rapid succession his revolver cracked. But a swiftly flying launch is not easy to hit and we heard the bullets whistle overhead.

Withersbee's boat was almost upon us when Clarke gave the wheel a quick twist and our pursuer shot past within three feet of our gunwale. As he threw the wheel Clarke's right arm shot into the basket at his side. I saw his hand come out holding a writhing black object. He swung it about his head once and let go. I saw it hurtle through the air and strike the doctor full between the shoulders. Withersbee dropped the wheel and stood up trying to fight the thing off while his boat, free of her helm, swung round in circles.

Suddenly he sprang to the gunwale of the boat, threw up his arms and with a piercing, terrified shriek disappeared in the black waters of the bay.

Clarke shot our boat over to the staggering derelict, reached over her side and stopped her engine. I held the gunwales together while Dudley leaped into the doctor's boat at a bound and returned bearing in his powerful arms the unconscious form of a young woman. The figure in the stern sat fixed and motionless.

Dudley swiftly cut the ropes which bound her. "It's she. It's she," he muttered. Clarke felt her pulse. "She's only fainted," he said. We fell to chaffing her wrists and Dudley scooped up a handful of sea water and bathed her brow.

At the tavern, after Miss Mason had been safely stowed away in a clean warm bed by the motherly landlady we patched together the ragged threads of the story over the best in the landlord's cellar.

"First," said Clarke, "if you are Oliver Dike, whose was the body that Dr. Withersbee shipped to Chicago in an opium case?"

"He was another attendant, a young fellow by the name of Frank Williams. We were very similar in appearance even to the fillings in our teeth."

"I didn't worry much about her for he treated her well and she seemed to be in no danger from him, and I had seen so many terrible things in cases where he didn't want to marry them that I was sort of hardened to it anyway. I was the watchman of the whole place after Williams disappeared and the only white man about the institution, all the rest being Chinks. I talked with Miss Mason on the sly sometimes but I paid no attention to her appeals until one day she mentioned the name of Mr. Dudley here. He was one of my boyhood football heroes and I determined to do something."

"But, Clarke, how did you see through all this when we were in Chicago?" I asked.

"I didn't see through it by any means. Only I saw some things which you didn't. Part of it you know. Then a connecting link was the zinc case which I recognized at once as one used in smuggling opium. I picked up the threads of Miss Mason's case where I had dropped them before, and the list of guests confirmed my hazy recollection that there was one from Etteso. The name of the town did not strike me the first time, of course, but the name of the doctor did, for while turning the case over in my mind I thought of something which I should have remembered the first time. It was that once in a Clark street opium den I had heard the name 'Withersbee' in a cautious whisper. My visit to Chinatown confirmed this. I have a Chinaman there that I depend on a good deal, and it reply to my question of who was the greatest dealer in smuggled opium in the country he whispered 'Withersbee,' swearing that he would never live to see another day for having told."

Dudley and Miss Mason were married the next spring and Clarke and I are often guests at their beautiful Lake Forest home. Withersbee's so-called asylum, from which, aided by the powerful Chinese tongs in which he wielded great influence, he conducted his extensive smuggling operations, now atones for its past sins as one of the principal outposts in the war against "The Great White Plague."

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