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**The Orpet-Lambert Murder Case**

**The Sad Ending of a School Love Affair--Youths Figure in Big Murder Case.**

By DOROTHY DIX.

I once saw a cast of child actors play "Hamlet." A little boy no bigger than Hop o' My Thumb, was the melancholy Dane. A tiny girl played love-lorn Ophelia. A chubby-cheeked youngster was the gravedigger, and moralized over a skull in a voice that still had a baby lisp to it.

I keep thinking of this grotesque theatrical spectacle--of these infants proclaiming speeches, they were too young to understand and going through situations whose significance they were too immature to grasp--as I sit day by day at the Orpet trial.

It seems as if this, too, must be children playing tragedy. It seems as if this also must be children playing "make-believe" at love, and passion, and murder, as children play at "keeping house," or "lady-go-to-see," or "red Indians," or "wild west."

It does not seem possible that this is a real murder trial, with judge and jury grimly in earnest, and with a prosecuting attorney asking in cold blood for the life of the prisoner at the bar.

Such things belong to grown-ups--to mature men and women, and this trial is a trial of children. Everybody connected with it in its essential features is young, so terribly, pitifully young. Twenty-two brief years covers the life span of the oldest of them, and the youngest is hardly more than fifteen.

William Orpet, who is accused of having murdered the girl with whom he had a love affair and of whom he had tired, is only twenty.

Marian Lambert, the dead girl who had loved not wisely but too well, and whom Orpet is charged with having slain, was barely eighteen.

Celeste Youker, with whom Orpet was in love and for whose sake he wished to free himself from Marian Lambert, is a slim, slip of a girl of twenty-two.

Josephine Davis, the most important witness for the prosecution, and who is the State's main hope of fastening guilt upon Orpet, if he is convicted, is a girl of eighteen.

Dorothy Mason, one of the most important witnesses for the defence, and who will testify that Marian Lambert had been in a depressed frame of mind and had declared at times that she felt that life was not worth living, is a pretty school girl of seventeen.

Eleanor Double, another important witness for the prosecution, is a high school girl of some sixteen or seventeen.

Verne Jackson, who saw Orpet hiding behind a tree on the day on which Marian Lambert disappeared, and who saw Marian cross the car tracks and start toward the spot where Orpet was hiding is not more than fifteen, a little school girl with her hair still in "pig-tails" down her back.

Besides these, there will be a crowd of other schoolgirls and boy witnesses to tell what they knew of Orpet and Marian Lambert, and their ill-fated love affair.

**Children's Tragedy.**

It is a children's tragedy literally and metaphorically. Literally because none of the principals in the pathetic drama had arrived at man's or woman's estate.

And it is a children's tragedy metaphorically because it is so sad and terrible a thing for these little hands, that still should be so white and clean to be so soiled with the handling of such cordial sin.

Incidentally, it is said, that this trial, dragging in, as it does, such a number of school girls and boys, is going to turn a searchlight on school morality that will startle the community.

It is rumored that William Orpet and Marian Lambert were not the only girl and boy who indulged in clandestine romances, and that their particular sin was, as Orpet cynically declares, in being found out, while the others still have their skeletons safely shut up in their school lockers.

The very suspicion that our schools are kindergartens for the development of premature sentiment, and that our children learn sex attraction before they do the three R's is a thought so horrible that it turns us cold with dread.

But there are indications that this is only too true. Every teacher will tell you that the boys and girls of this day do not know too little about what we euphemistically call "the secrets of life," that they know too much. They discuss them with a frank brutality under which modesty and reserve withers as a white fly does under the scorching breath of a sun.

**Warning to Parents.**

Education is the great American

fetich, before which average American parents sacrifice their very hearts' blood. They have a superstitious reverence for book-learning, and are determined to give their children the advantages of schooling that perhaps they never had. This is what the Orpets did. This is what the Lamberts did. They toiled extra hours, they did without little luxuries and comforts that they might keep their boy and girl in school, and this is what millions of other poor hard-working fathers and mothers in this country are doing.

There is nothing more beautiful or heroic than the effort that these parents are making to give their children the weapon of knowledge with which to fight the battle of life, but it would be well for them not to just take it for granted that when they send their boys and girls to school that they have insured the youngster's well-being.

It would be well for them to realize that the devil of temptation may lurk in academic shades as well as elsewhere, and to find out what lessons their children are learning besides the lessons that are taught in books.

It is a common thing to hear a mother give a sigh of relief and say she is so thankful because her children are safe in school. But are they safe in school, particularly in the schools where co-education exists?

**Danger in Schools.**

If propinquity between the sexes is dangerous in the outside world, why is it not equally dangerous in the school room? What of the familiarity that breaks down all barriers between the boy and girl who sit side by side in the classes, day after day, and session after session, until they get to know each other so well that there is not the reserve between them that there would be between strangers.

What of the juvenile flirtations that manifest themselves in little boys carrying home little girls books from school? What of the limitless opportunities for secret meetings at school affairs? Where are you boy and girl when you think they are at school? They are not always under the teacher's eye as you fatuously suppose.

Do not forget that human nature is always human nature, and that it is never so strong and so little to be trusted as when one is in one's teens. It is then that the appetites are strongest and the joy of living calls to us not loudly, and we have least strength and knowledge to withstand temptation.

That schools are not merely shrines of learning we all know. That boys and girls are safest when separated at the critical time in their immature youth of ordinary common sense teaches Co-education has its enthusiastic advocates, but one case like the Orpet-Lambert tragedy refutes a million

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**Lines on Our Soldier Lad from Salt Pond.**

In other, larger places, Maybe it is thought Salt Pond with quite a few young men Has failed to do her part.

But one thought it his duty To go and fight the Hun, And so he will not give up arms Until the victory's won.

His name it is Duke Manuel, A name we all know well, He proceeded to the firing line As soon as he finished drill.

The battles on Gallipoli In these his part he played, Until with rheumatism seized, He to the hospital was conveyed.

But here he was not satisfied, To the trenches he returned, And after five months healing He once more faced the Germ.

His parents they're awaiting To hear the war is o'er, When he to them will then return To leave them never more.

If we hear that he is wounded In this most dreadful fray, May we not in our sorrow Forget the coming day.

When Peace shall be established Throughout the whole wide land, When Christ shall sit upon the Throne And summons every man.

ETHEL MANUEL.

Salt Pond.

**Motor Lessons From the Battle-Grounds of Europe**

A force of 500,000 men requires more than 8,000 trucks, on the basis of a one-and-one-half-ton capacity, is the statement of Major Francis Lawton of the Commissary Department of the East, U.S.A., who bases his assertion on a study of motor equipment requirements of the armies in the European war. Major Lawton recently spoke before the Pennsylvania section of the Society of Automobile Engineers on the transportation lessons of the European war in relation to the problems of preparedness in this country.

The lesson of Europe shows, he said, that rapidly moving troops must rely on motor trucks. The tactical unit of an army, a division, consisting of 22,000 men, required 175,000 pounds of food a day, and a great task of organization was necessary in order to be prepared to handle the problem of transportation in this country.

Comparing the truck with animal transportation, Major Lawton said: "With animals the average march is eighteen miles per day, and with a total distance of seventy-five miles from the base 780 wagons would be required. With motor trucks of about two tons capacity the work could be done with 120 vehicles. With 240 trucks a division could operate 150 miles from its base. A division operating forty miles from its base would require thirty trucks."

"Lessons from the present war in Europe teach us the following facts: "1. Ordinary commercial trucks are best, the special body types not necessary.

"2. Light chassis for ambulance work are best.

"3. Best all-around car, one and one-half tons.

"4. Heavy armored cars have proved satisfactory.

"5. Motorcycles on a grand scale are unsatisfactory.

"6. Passenger cars make good ambulances, but the body should be arranged so that the driver is over the engine and the wounded lie between the axles.

"7. Radiators are proving to be the weak spots.

"8. Electric starting is satisfactory.

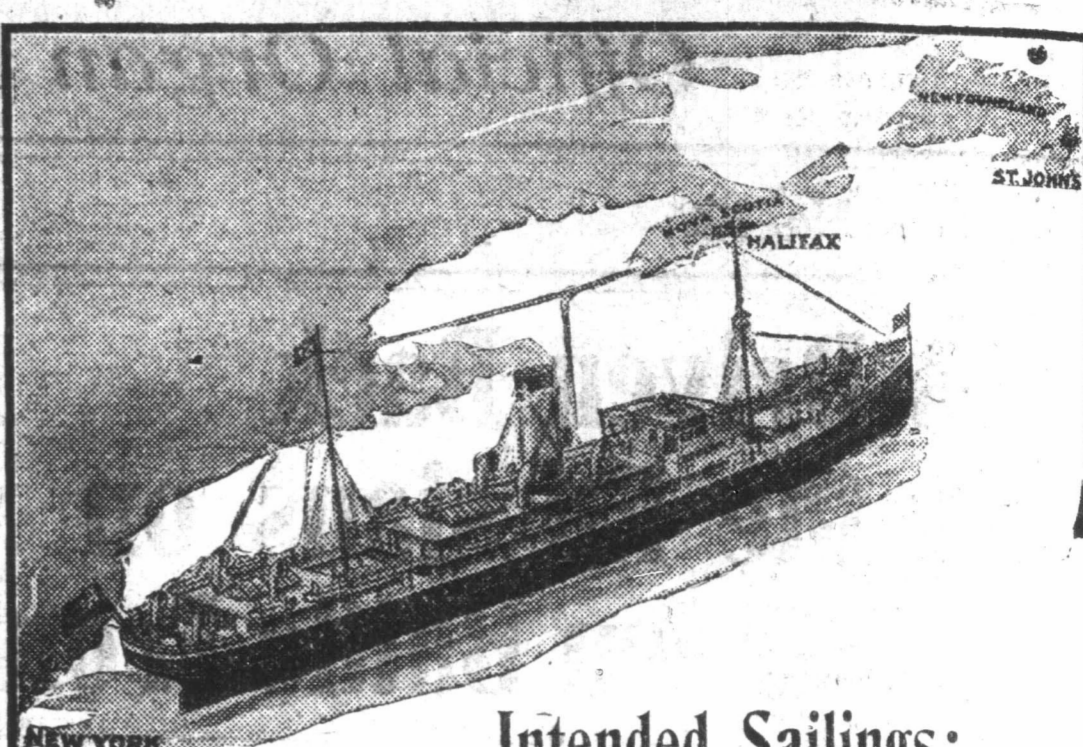
"9. Electric headlights should be mounted on universal joints.

"United States Government favors the one-and-one-half-ton truck on account of its ability to traverse the ordinary bridges without breaking them down. This, of course, only refers to the divisional trains, as larger trucks can be used satisfactorily on the main roads. To attempt to use trucks of three tons and over spells disaster."

"A force of 500,000 men requires over 8,000 trucks of one-and-one-half-ton capacity, and the problem is where and how to get these trucks. They must be organized into units of the same make if they are to be effective."

tons of theory on this subject. And when this case is done we shall have more irrefutable data on the subject compiled from the best of high school girls and boys who will have been the witnesses in it. They know from their own experience whether co-education is good or not.

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