

ST. JOHNS REVIEW

Devoted to the Interests of the Peninsula, the Manufacturing Centre of the Northwest.

VOL. I.

ST. JOHNS, OREGON, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1904.

NO. 6

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Various Topics of Local and General Interest Briefly and Tersely Treated.

Timely Matters Dealt With and Interspersed with Timely Suggestions on Local Affairs.

A matter that deserves attention, and one that is very important, has not been given consideration. We refer to the matter of preparing suitable advertising matter to be distributed to thousands of visitors who will attend the 1905 fair at Portland next year. There will be people here from all parts of the East, many of whom will not return, but will remain in the West, and the locality which presents the best inducements will attract them, and most probably get them as permanent residents. It might be a profitable scheme for the Commercial Association to take hold of. Certainly the opportunity for presenting the claims of St. Johns and the peninsula as a most desirable locality should not be neglected. It is not too early to mature plans and devise ways and means to carry out this idea. A publicity committee might be appointed and given ample time to prepare something along this line, which would be to the point.

Next year will be an eventful one for the entire Western country. It is hoped that permanent benefits will be derived from the great influx of visitors who may come during the fair. The measure of benefit, however, rests, to a large extent, with our own people. While our natural resources are many and varied, yet these are not of themselves sufficient. A great deal will depend upon the manner and kind of treatment tendered. If our visitors are greeted with the true type of Western hospitality, and made feel that their dollars are all we want, instead of a sturdy and progressive settler and member of the community, we opine the best of them will not be induced to remain with us. The impressions formed of the people of a community go a long way in governing the decision of a new-comer.

The appearance of a town or city is another factor in determining the question of choosing a location. If the streets are unimproved, no sidewalks, the home surroundings of a don't-care character, all enter into the matter. School facilities and church privileges are important features, and should be set forth in an attractive way. Of course, one here in St. Johns will not have much to brag about when it comes to streets and sidewalks, but we can and should do something in this direction. Our school, it is hoped, will be an object, by next summer, to which we can point with pride, and truthfully assure the visitors that the accommodations are ample. Of churches, we will have a creditable showing. Let us try and crimp up a little, and be able to present this phase of our city in as favorable a light as we can our commercial resources.

A man must be on bad terms with himself and in a most uncomfortable state of mind who, whenever public-spirited citizens come to the fore and advocate any kind of public improvement, raises his hands in holy horror, and imputes nothing but selfish and mercenary motives. Such people must be in a bad mood with themselves constantly. If all the deeds performed were the result of mercenary motives, this would be a most undesirable world to live in. But it is not true. It is not true of the men who devote much of their time and money to help beautify and build up the City of St. Johns. The true friends, who make personal sacrifices to assist in making the city more pleasant and desirable as a place to live, are prompted by more ennobling motives than mere personal gain. We should all endeavor to cultivate a more charitable view of things, not only for our own sakes, but with a view to the comfort of others. The constant croaker is a menace to his own contentment and a most undesirable companion to associate with his neighbors, who want to get all the good out of life there is in

it. Quit it. You accomplish no good and add to the discomfort of others.

The council acted in a most commendable way when it unanimously appointed J. Henry Smith to the position of city engineer. Mr. Smith is an old citizen of St. Johns, interested in its growth and development, and enjoys the confidence of the people. In his profession he is both skilled and reliable, and is better posted in regard to landmarks, so necessary in establishing lines and grades in a new town, than any other man in his line of work. The step taken by the council is a wise one, and meets with hearty approval by the citizens.

Now that a city engineer has been appointed, it appears proper that street improvements be started with as little delay as possible. It is true the powers of the council in this respect are confined to a very narrow limit, yet popular opinion will back up the city authorities in going to the extreme limit permitted by the present charter, and when the new organic law is in force, something will have been started, at least.

The inactivity of the present city council, which is certainly a matter of regret by every individual citizen of the, finds an apology to some extent in the limited authority vested by the old charter. We say some apology, but not sufficient to excuse the council for such complete failure to provide ordinances to meet present emergencies. The council, as a whole, don't seem to realize that they were selected to transact the city business, that the people, having confidence in their ability, placed them in an executive position, and clothed them with power to act as their judgment dictated, keeping within the limit of the charter, in the interest of the people as a whole. If legislative bodies never passed laws until they had gone around and consulted each individual constituent, they would never do anything. In our case no measure is passed or acted upon until every man in town is consulted. It seems to be a reasonable view that the city council should be able to discern the needs of the city, and act, do things; then, if any considerable body of citizens object, let them resort to popular remonstrance, and the council then consider the matter. As it is, any measure which may come up has as many different opinions expressed about it as there are voters, before the council will move, if they move at all. This is neither a safe nor correct method, to say nothing of the shoddy upman about it. Let the council adopt a policy and pursue it. The growth of the city demands it, and if they do this the chances are nine out of ten that their course would meet the approval of the people whose business they they were elected to transact. There is no business, from a peanut stand to a big transcontinental railroad, that can survive more than one executive head, subject, of course, to business rules or laws provided. The council has the charter for its guide, if they will only act as they are authorized by that document they will come pretty near satisfying the people.

To say that the telephone system is bad, nauseating, is only to repeat what everybody thinks and says (and what they say wouldn't look well in cold type) who has occasion to use this necessary adjunct to the commercial and social system of the present day. The company which operates the system is directly to blame, their protestations to the contrary, notwithstanding. Other cities have good systems, and no reasonable excuse can be offered for the poor service which is the rule here. The telephone system has been perfected to a nicety, both from a mechanical and scientific standpoint, and good service can and is given, but not here. Now,

whether the patrons of the Portland system are victims of wilful or ignorant neglect, or whether it results from a desire to increase dividends of the stockholders by rigid economy, is to us unknown, but we do know the service is almost intolerable, and from the continuance of this state of affairs it seems the patrons of the company are helpless.

A Portland paper prints an account of a lady who was using the telephone being shocked. That's nothing; every person here who tackles the telephone is "shocked," and badly, too. It's bad enough to "shock" the Old Nick himself.

You may say that the "knocker" does no harm because he is of little force, and his "sphere of influence" is limited. True enough, his "little hammer" don't affect you. But it is something like this: You hear a worthless cur bark, but if you don't see him, it might, for all you know, be a thousand-dollar Irish setter. Same with the "knocker"—for all the stranger knows he might be a man of standing and influence in the community. The stranger has to know him before he has his correct weight and measure. It only takes a few minutes to do this, but some big damage has been done in a very brief space of time.

It has been suggested that the carnival of bribery and official corruption so prevalent in municipal corporations throughout the land may be traced to education in early life. The "tipping" system, for instance, is a system of bribery. Get aboard the sleeping car, and if you don't "tip" the porter, you're "it." Go to first-class hotels and restaurants. If you want attention the little bellboys, waiters and porters have to be "tipped." It's bribery. You pay the legitimate price for accommodation, but you must bribe the servants, young and old, or you are slighted. The result is, some of these young bribe-takers grow up and are placed in positions of trust and honor. Perhaps purchasing agents, and to induce them to purchase your wares you have got to bribe them. Guess it's about right. It is the result of education.

FIRE DEPARTMENT STARTED.

An Enthusiastic Meeting and Temporary Organization.

A large and enthusiastic meeting was held at the City Hall Tuesday evening for the purpose of initiating a movement having for its object the organization of a volunteer fire department. W. H. King was elected chairman, and M. F. Tufts secretary. A number of citizens were called upon, and expressed themselves as highly favorable to the proposition, and promised substantial support. The following agreement was drawn up and signed by about forty citizens, mostly young men:

"We, the undersigned, hereby agree to organize a volunteer fire department to use such apparatus as the council may secure, subject to such rules and regulations as the council may provide."

After some discussion the age limit for active members was placed at from sixteen to forty-five years. The general meeting was then adjourned, and the active members took hold. M. F. Tufts was elected temporary chairman and L. F. Chase temporary secretary. A committee, consisting of T. T. Parker, G. D. Carlson, Henry Bickner and the chairman, to draft a constitution and by-laws, to report at the next meeting, to be held Tuesday evening at the City Hall.

The enthusiasm displayed at this first meeting bespeaks success. Our young men, as well as the older ones, appreciate the importance of measures for fire protection. Their zeal is most commendable, and is a good omen for St. Johns. No town or city becomes great without the help of its young men and youthful vigor. It now remains for the city council and older business men to do their duty—foster and encourage the spirit manifested. The council should not delay the establishment of hydrants, and procure the necessary hose, reels, etc., to utilize the same. Procrastination is dangerous.

PERSONAL AND OTHERWISE

About People Who are Going and Coming to and From St. Johns.

And Gossip of a Lively Nature of Happenings In and Around Our Prosperous City.

J. P. Wrinkle and family will soon occupy their new house.

Mrs. H. F. Statterly has moved into her new house on Baltimore street.

L. C. Slater spent Saturday and Sunday with friends in Sherwood.

Mrs. Crippen left last week for Illinois, where she will visit her parents.

William Baldwin has bought two lots in North St. Johns and will build two cottages.

Walter Coon has just returned from Oswego, where he has a flock of sheep wintering.

Mrs. Bickness, of Hood River, Or., spent a few days in St. Johns, the guest of Mrs. Stearns.

Miss Margaret McLeod, of Oregon City, spent Sunday in the city, the guest of Mrs. James Tufts and her son Moses.

Miss L. Vira Marsh and Miss Mary Vincent, of Skamokawa, spent last Sunday the guests of Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Learned.

James McMillan, of Wasco, Sherman county, Oregon, was in the city Saturday and purchased some St. Johns real estate.

J. W. Noyes, of Duluth, Minn., has accepted a position as manager of the St. Johns branch of the Much Hardware company.

Joseph Bickner, of Oswego, where he is engaged in general merchandise business, spent Sunday in the city, visiting his sons, the Bickner brothers.

Professor J. A. Tibbets is organizing classes in music, and is meeting with good success. The professor comes highly recommended as an instructor.

A. A. Osborn, formerly of Marysville, Cal., has moved into a new house near the Carlson mills. Mr. Osborn and his wife are employed in the woolen mills.

T. L. Dugger was in the city Saturday visiting Bickner Bros., old friends of his. He called on the Review, and passed the compliments of the season.

Billy Evans, one of the popular motormen, who has been on the sick list for some time, went to work last Sunday after laying off for a couple of weeks.

F. M. Dodge and wife, of Woodburn, Or., were in the city Wednesday. They are pioneer residents of St. Johns, having lived here many years, and are well and favorably known by the old residents.

Mr. and Mrs. H. D. Begun, of Lafayette, Or., spent Sunday in the city, the guests of Dr. W. W. Hicks. They were so favorably impressed with St. Johns that they may return and locate.

Dr. Dave Rafferty, one of the oldest and most popular pioneers, came down from East Portland Thursday. Dr. Rafferty is one of the Oregon state commissioners of the Lewis and Clark fair.

C. J. McLean and Grant Key, of La Grande, were in the city Thursday looking around. They are very favorably impressed with St. Johns, and may invest. Mr. Key is the inventor of an air ship, which he claims is nearly perfect.

Frank Davis, formerly traveling salesman for Page & Son of Portland, has assumed the management of the St. Johns grocery, the store having changed hands. Mr. Davis is an experienced man in this line, and will no doubt get his share of the business.

P. J. Peterson starts tomorrow for a visit to his old home at Volga, N. D. Mr. Peterson is one of our most highly esteemed business men, fully imbued with the true St. Johns spirit, and proposes to give the people back in Dakota the facts regarding this country. He will spend the holidays there.

The St. Johns meat market, to keep up with the progress of the city, is repairing and re-roofing its barn.

ALMOST ASSURED.

Active Steps Being Taken to Secure the Park.

The Review has urged the importance of securing the Park to the city while it is yet possible to get it at a price within reasonable bounds. At last a movement in this direction is in progress.

The Ladies' Civic Improvement League made an effort some months ago to purchase the block on which the car barns now stand, but received so little encouragement that they had to abandon the effort. Since then the block has been purchased by Mr. Holbrook. And although he does not wish to sell, he has made an offer to the town of St. Johns of the block for \$6000, of which \$2000 must be paid in thirty days.

The committees of the Commercial Association and the Ladies' Civic Improvement League have taken the matter up, and propose to raise a subscription to pay the first installment of \$2000. Subscriptions of \$5 or over, to be refunded as soon as the town is in position to take over the property and pay therefor. Smaller sums than \$5 will be retained by the Ladies' Club to build seats, platform and other improvements.

It will require some persistent and active work to accomplish these results, but the building spot for city hall and the beautiful park that can be made will more than pay for the trouble and expenditure. A magnanimous offer of all the water necessary for a fountain and keep up the grass and other shrubbery and plants fresh and green during the dry months of the year, has been made by the St. Johns Water company, and this without charge or expense to the town.

For a bandstand and outdoor meetings there can be no better spot selected, and we hope this effort of the clubs will meet with the liberal support of every citizen of St. Johns.

Electric Lights and Power.

Before many of our readers receive this issue of The Review, St. Johns will have been lighted by electricity, and the current here to supply motive power to those of our industrial concerns desiring to use it. Thus another step of advancement in our growth, and another page of history added to future annals of St. Johns. On Tuesday last the transformers, for which the Portland General Electric company have been so long and anxiously awaiting, arrived, and men were at once put to work putting them in place. The officers of the company have given ample evidence that they used all due diligence in perfecting the system. The delay was evidently not their fault, but due to the overcrowded condition of the factories, followed by unlooked for delays in transportation. While many of our citizens have been disappointed on account of not receiving service as soon as expected, they now rejoice that the "juice" is here for their use.

The Sharper Failed.

One of the short-change sharps visited our town last week, but did not accomplish anything, as far as could be ascertained. One of his methods of swindling was to buy 15 cents worth of tobacco and give \$10 in payment. After receiving the change he would find 15 cents in his pocket, and then ask for the return of his \$10. He would attempt to embarrass his victim in some manner while returning the change, and instead of giving back the right change would keep out \$5. Another scheme was to slide a dollar up his sleeve, and make it appear he was \$1 short. His scheme did not work in three places he attempted it.