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PORTLAND, TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 1914.

ANOTHER PENSION BILL.

Approach of a Congressional election is foreshadowed by the introduction of a new pension bill. Its aim is to pension widows and orphans of veterans of the Spanish War and the Philippine rebellion. It grants a pension of \$12 a month to all widows of honorably discharged soldiers, sailors or marines, either regular or volunteers, who served ninety days or more during these wars between April 21, 1898, and July 4, 1902, the widow being "without means of support other than her daily labor, and an actual net income not exceeding \$25 per year."

This bill was introduced by Representative Key, of Ohio, and is on the House calendar, backed by the Spanish War veterans. In its favor it is contended that the allowance is the same as has been made to widows and orphans of veterans of other wars. The total number who served during the Spanish War was about 434,000. Destitute widows and orphans are estimated at 1,000,000. The veterans' organization, who, in their own words, "ask absolutely nothing for themselves, but only provision for the helpless widow and orphan." Widows can secure pensions under present law, if they can show their husbands' deaths to have been caused by disabilities incurred in the service, but this is rarely practicable. The bill is said merely to continue the well-recognized policy of the Government. Failure to provide for dependents of Spanish War veterans is pronounced unjust discrimination. The burden of public debt is now much lighter than when Union veterans were pensioned.

Against the bill it is argued that it grants pensions regardless of whether widowhood and dependence are due to the husband and father's service. Where dependence is due to disability incurred in the service, the present law makes provision, and that the bill continues the present policy is held to be an argument against it, not in its favor. As to the reduction of the National debt, if pensions are justified, they should be given without regard to the Government's ability to pay.

The proof that the bill is only the entering wedge for wholesale pensioning of Spanish War veterans, the growth of the Civil War pension roll is cited. Pensions in the '70s totalled about \$30,000,000, but reached a maximum of nearly \$180,000,000 in the present fiscal year, and for the year 1913 the estimate is \$169,150,000. The increase in amount has continued in spite of a decrease in number of pensioners. This reached its highest point—929,446—in 1903 and in 1913 had fallen to 820,200. The pension committee can only guess at the expense the bill will involve, but it estimates the first cost at about \$1,500,000 a year, with a slight increase each year. The Pension Office places the initial expenditure at \$2,500,000 "with a promise of increase from year to year for a number of years."

The passage of the bill is considered certain, for no member of the House dare criticize it unless he is prepared for political extinction. How easily a Representative's defeat might be compassed by voting against a pension bill, in which not only the veterans, but all their relatives are interested, is estimated by the situation in Massachusetts. In 1910 the total vote for Congress was: Republican, 202,126; Democratic 203,524. In five districts casting 182,000 votes, the total of pluralities of the winners was only 2305 and in these districts there were about 18,000 pensioners. The bill will pass the House, but will meet with determined opposition in the Senate. The President's attitude is problematical.

MAKING PEOPLE READ.

A publishers' co-operative bureau has been formed in the East to foster the reading habit. They say it has been decaying of late for many reasons. One reason, and a strange one, is the modern method of living in apartments. The ordinary flat has no room for books, which, small as they often are, still take up space and when there is barely room for the bed and the kitchen table libraries are only too likely to be crowded out. Another reason is the fact that reading is said to be the multiplication of public libraries. We doubt the soundness of this, however. If all public libraries are conducted like the one in Portland they promote reading habits instead of weakening them. There is an organized and persistent effort at our public library to induce patrons not only to read books, but to read good ones and there is ground to believe that it is successful. Still there is no question but that people read far fewer books than they ought and the effort of the publishers to persuade them in better things is a laudable one. The fact that incidentally enlarge profits need not be dwelt upon too consistently. The publishers complain justly that the book store is not what it once was. It seldom contains a clerk who is over head and ears in lowly things, nor is the proprietor often of that rare old stamp who hated to sell

a book because he cherished it so dearly. To the modern keeper of a book store, say these disgruntled publishers, a book is like a lump of coal. Without adopting it to the full their scandalous opinion, we may admit that there is something in it. There is also substance in the complaint that readers who would like to buy a new book oftentimes cannot get it in the store. They see something fascinating advertised in the magazine, a thrilling thought-provoker, it may be, like Walter Lipmann's "Preface to Politics," and run to the book store in hot haste to buy it, only to be met with the answer that it is not in stock. By the time the book has been sent for and procured the prospective buyer has his mind on something else, perhaps on a picture show, and the opportunity is gone forever.

WHAT IT ALL MEANS.

Clearly the city is stirred over this meter agitation as it has not been for years. In a definite way the referendum is a protest against high taxes, colossal waste and demonstrated inefficiency and a demand for economy. The tax-esters would better take heed. The uprising of the long-suffering taxpayers is portentous.

The tax-hidden public sees that meters will cost \$500,000 less than any money. When Commissioner Daly devises a plan to put \$500,000 in the taxpayers' pockets instead of a wasteful scheme to take \$500,000 out of their pockets, he may look for more appreciation and less criticism.

The citizen who pays \$1 for water on a flat rate and finds that his neighbor is paying 75 cents is often for meters. Naturally. But the meter business is intended to include everybody. When all houses are metered, how can one pay less than another, conditions being equal? The water department must have revenue. When all places are metered the cost of administration and of maintenance will be heavily increased. The average rate for the ordinary consumer will not be less; it must then be more.

Commissioner Brewster is handy with figures on water. So is Commissioner Daly. The water department has figures to bestow when a Commissioner is to use them. Yet when Chairman Conway, of the referendum committee, asked Commissioner Daly for an estimate of the cost of a certain phase of water service he was put off with the excuse that it would take six weeks to get the figures ready.

The Oregonian has information that Mayor Rusklight asked a competent engineer to make an estimate of the extra cost to install reinforcing mains to supply the sections now not adequately furnished with water during all seasons. The figure was \$90,000. Yet the extra cost the water department—in the city's employ—seek to alarm the public with the talk about millions.

THE BLUEBIRD.

As it has done in Boston and Chicago, not to mention other places, the Drama League will probably undertake a campaign to make "The Bluebird" a notable success in Portland. The play is one of the most beautiful in the world. Not only is it permeated by a profound philosophy, but the action is charming throughout and the specialties it exhibits are varied and wonderful. Even those who pay no attention to Maeterlinck's thought in "The Bluebird" are fascinated by his dramatic power and the marvels of the action. To some spectators the climax of the fairy play is in the scene with Queen Night where Tyltyl, in spite of her threats, ventures to open the door into the garden of happiness, where the combination of bluebirds, though unhappily the boy does not manage to catch any genuine specimens. Those that he does capture here and there in the course of the play all turn some other color in the sunlight and it is only at home, returned from his wanderings in the forest, that he finally wins the mysterious object of his quest.

HAIRD TO DRAW THE LINE.

Democratic leaders find that legislation supplementary to the anti-trust law is not so easy to draft as they have imagined. Already, as a result of conferences between President Wilson and Chairman Clayton, of the House Judiciary committee, it has been decided to rewrite three of the "five brothers." These are the bills defining offenses against the Sherman law; the bill regulating trade relations by supplementing the Sherman law, and the bill forbidding interlocking directorates. The great difficulty evidently is to state in general terms what is forbidden as hurtful without including that which is beneficial to the public or is a reasonable exercise of freedom in business. Yet in an effort to preserve what is beneficial and not to impair reasonable liberty, Congress might have a hopeless and harmful combination of the oil and tobacco trusts be forbidden to fix an excessive uniform price without by the same law forbidding fruitgrowers to combine for the purpose of marketing their crops at a price which will be higher than the lowest for the consumer than would be the price made by middlemen to whom individual growers in competition with each other would sell; or without forbidding workmen and women to combine in securing living wages? That is the puzzle before Congress. Criticism of the interlocking directorates bill has made such an impression on the House committee that the conclusion is that the bill is too broad and goes too far. The bill forbids any person to be a director in two or more banks, or in two or more corporations engaged in interstate commerce, or in conducting, supplying, or maintaining a railroad and in the railroad also. In many towns there is some one leader in business whose services are of great value to several institutions in which he holds stock, but this bill would deprive him of his services and compel them to fall back on men of a lower grade.

The test to be applied in each case should be the effect of each act or fact on public interest in preserving competition. A combination in its very nature monopolistic should be condemned as injurious, but one which results in injury to the public should be permitted, so long as its effects are beneficial not only to its members, but to the consumers. Such discrimination cannot be made by law; it can only be made by an administrative body vested with power to judge of each case according to its peculiar circumstances. Such a

body would be the proposed trade commission, and the broad powers which it would exercise require that it be composed of men of the highest type, free from partisan bias and from any business entanglements and above the insidious influences which would doubtless be used with it. A board of this character, well paid, with long tenure and above party influence could secure to the people all the advantages of co-operation in business and keep them free from the oppression of monopoly.

AN EXAMPLE IN CO-OPERATION.

An interview in The Oregonian, March 15, with Mr. Haberlach, secretary of the Tillamook Creamery Association, a corporation which is composed of eighteen of the twenty-two cheese factories in Tillamook County, is fraught with much food for thought for all interested in the upbuilding of Oregon. It also gives the intimation that the cheese manufacturers of the Northwest, as well as those of all other sections of our country, may see at least a small slump in prices when the new tariff law hits us with its full force.

Thus far there has been but little cheese imported under the new conditions, but Australia will likely undertake to compete with us to our disadvantage as soon as the cheese-shipment season opens.

The Tillamook manufacturers have accomplished wonders for their section, but we must remember that dairying conditions here are practically ideal. With a few exceptions, and those along the Pacific Coast in Oregon, are there any spots in Uncle Sam's domains where the dairy cows do as well as in Tillamook. But even under those conditions the cheese business of that section would not have prospered as it has because of the rare intelligence of the manufacturers displayed in their co-operative manufacturing and selling operations.

The eighteen large plants mentioned, with a total output last year of 3,505,516 pounds of cheese, which brought the total \$41,742, marketed the entire product through the selling agency conducted for them by Mr. Haberlach. The other four creameries, with an output valued at \$85,000, sold through various other channels; but the Haberlach system dominated the business of the county.

Mr. Haberlach has a fine future for the cheese business in his section, but points to the need of cheap money for land-clearing operations that more pastureage be had. He thinks if 5 per cent money could be had by the landowners of that section on long time the business would show wonderful increase each year. In fact, who goes to that section and sees the large areas of logged-off lands now lying idle will feel the force of Mr. Haberlach's statement.

It might be well to point to the Tillamook co-operative operations among the dairymen for the benefit of carriers already formed and now forming for handling fruits and vegetables and turning into cash the by-products now going to waste in many sections. There is no better evidence to be gained in the West of the benefits of intelligent co-operation than that of the Tillamook dairymen.

WATER A GOOD THING TO USE.

In his letter published today Commissioner Brewster quotes a paragraph from an article heretofore printed in The Oregonian. The paragraph expresses a doubt that installation of meters will alleviate a shortage of water in districts where the shortage is due wholly to inadequacy of distributive system. In another article The Oregonian expressed the same opinion but added the qualification that rates might be high enough on measured water to promote such economy that the shortage would be lessened.

In certain sections of South Portland three-fourths of a water shortage due wholly to small mains has, according to Mr. Brewster, been cured by installation of meters in part of the district. His figures on comparative cost of these meters and the new main that otherwise would have been required show a saving in five years in interest and other charges of more than \$10,000.

We are not wholly satisfied with Mr. Brewster's figures. The new main would have relieved the entire shortage. The installation of meters did not cure but three-fourths of the difficulty. The 6625 charged up to meters ought to be \$6854. Then meters make necessary a useless billing system, which it is estimated costs a dollar a year per meter. It would require 993 meters to measure the water on the premises of every consumer in the district and in five years the overhead charge for billing would be nearly \$5999. As a matter of fact the money saved is about \$3599 or \$700 a year. To save this \$700 nearly 1000 families would have to be restricted in the use of water when there is an ample quantity to be had within a distance of two miles.

The district cited is occupied largely by workmen's homes. If these water consumers have been discouraged in ornamentation of their yards the saving is not cause for great exultation. We have gone to great expense in bringing water to the mountain stream to the City of Portland. The supply of pure water is more than we can use. The reservoirs are full and overflowing. Yet the distributive system is such that in certain portions of the city householders are compelled to economize, when they should be encouraged to freer use of water.

It is silly of the statistician, furnished by Mr. Brewster that the average daily consumption per capita where the water supply is metered is 52 gallons. Fifty-two gallons used daily by each of a family of five will cost about \$13 a year at the present rates. Under the flat rate the same family, if water is used by them for sprinkling purposes, pays \$13. The flat-rate consumer uses, on an average 112 gallons daily. It thus appears that the meter rate is more than double the flat rate. No wonder the workmen in South Portland complained when the meters were put in.

The Oregonian is opposed to the meter plan chiefly as a matter of principle. It seems absurd to expend \$500,000 to restrict the use of water when we have three times as much water as we use. The Oregonian opposes wanton waste, but believes that the use of water should be encouraged when it goes to beautify the city and maintain its reputation throughout the country for wealth of lawns, roses and shrubbery. Waste can be curbed where there is waste by an inspection that will cost practically nothing. Where there is a shortage that cannot be ascribed to

waste, but wholly to insufficient mains, a high-priced meter service to restrict an adequate, legitimate use of water is far less preferable than no mains, even if the latter are actually more costly.

Kansas City has discovered that the problem of divorces is largely individual. Finding that its judges were granting one divorce for every three marriages, the people raised a fund to hire a divorce proctor, who, the first year, cut down the number of divorces 40 per cent and the second year prevented an increase, though the population increased. He found the increase to be principally in uncontested divorces, where the parties agree to separate, and behind the scenes in these cases he found "the scrupulous lawyer, the meddling neighbor and the too obtrusive relative." He made it his business to bring the couple together and owes his success chiefly to his work as peacemaker. Since divorce on any but serious grounds is against public policy, the public should be represented at divorce hearings.

The great Louis Agassiz "had no time to waste making money" and died comparatively poor, but with world-wide fame. His son, Alexander, developed the Calumet mining property and died a millionaire. His grandson, Rodolphe, draws a princely income as one of the Calumet officials, besides owning a huge block of stock. The family has changed its view on the money question since grandfather died.

There was a time not long ago when the Portland Y. M. C. A. had more members than any other on the coast, but the association is now making a grand effort to regain its former prestige. For the Y. M. C. A. numbers mean power and power means good work for mankind. All who can join ought to join.

Ships that pass in the night need no longer be quite so mysterious to one another as Sarah Grand found them. They can now converse by wireless telephone and learn each other's secrets as each flits on its way. The Duke of the Abruzzi has reported a wireless conversation over forty-five miles of water. This is a good beginning. Oh, his across the Atlantic will follow soon.

President Foster nobly proclaims his faith in leadership and leaders. "A thousand petty lawyers, seeking what trouble they may make, cannot take the place of a Charles Hughes; a thousand reporters of idle gossip cannot take the place of one Lyman Abbott." Such words as these, taken properly to heart by the Reed students, are worth more than all their textbooks.

The usefulness of the parcel post steadily improves. By a new regulation soon to be in force farm products may be shipped in any convenient packages just as by express, at least one another as Sarah Grand found them. They can now converse by wireless telephone and learn each other's secrets as each flits on its way. The Duke of the Abruzzi has reported a wireless conversation over forty-five miles of water. This is a good beginning. Oh, his across the Atlantic will follow soon.

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USE IS RESTRICTED BY METERS

Water Consumption Falls Off in One District, Says Commissioner. PORTLAND, March 16.—(To the Editor.)—In an editorial March 13 you say: "To attempt to alleviate conditions with meters in the southeastern district is extravagant, because the meters actually how much water the consumer uses, but the question of when he uses it. If we buy meters we shall be obliged to enlarge the mains or regulate the pressure of sprinkling by law."

In South Portland there is a pretty definite case of relief afforded by meters without enlarging mains. For about 20 years there has been a ton-inch main from the upper reservoir in the City Park running out Corbett street. The elevation of the reservoir is 200 feet, and the water in the mains should go to 250 feet or better. Up to five years ago there was a great shortage each summer along and near Corbett street and extending from White street to Hamilton avenue. In ordinary summer months there was no pressure at 150 feet, and a general shortage throughout the district. About five years ago more than 700 meters were installed, the result of which is that the pressure extends to an elevation of 243 feet, except after an unusually long, hot dry spell. More than 75 per cent of the trouble has been eliminated. If the meters had not been installed it would have been necessary to lay a 20-inch main for a distance of two miles at a cost of \$22,000, reaching to \$5 per foot. Such a plan would today have cost the city as follows:

Interest 5 years at 4 1/2 per cent.—\$11,880 Depreciation 5 years at 2 per cent.— 4,280 Total \$16,160

The original cost for meters was approximately \$22,000, reaching 70 meters at \$12 each. Today, after five years' service, the cost is:

Interest 5 years at 4 1/2 per cent.—\$2,025 Maintenance, 29 cents per meter per annum \$20,750 Total \$22,775

The water office recommends the purchase of 250 meters for the South Portland district in this belief that the remaining shortage will be entirely overcome.

In the southeastern district there are 5500 houses on the water service. There can be no question about the responsibility of the city to provide sufficient water for house use and fire protection, and so far we have not met the responsibility for this locality. The cause of the trouble is from the small pipes taken over by the city from the private companies, which must ultimately be replaced at an estimated cost of \$584,200. Mr. Clarke has recommended the purchase of meters for the district, which will postpone the laying of mains costing \$225,000 for five years beyond the period when they would otherwise be required.

Let it be assumed that it is necessary to obtain a saving per meter on his landlord-pay-the-water-rent measure. Now Mr. Daly, through his engineer, says quarterly billing is to be adopted at all residential electrical fires. We still have for the annual cost of a meter, 48 cents for interest, \$1 for depreciation and \$1 for useless meters, or a total of \$2.48 per meter annually for the 42,584 meters in Portland that are now unmetered. Of course this is far too low, for the items here mentioned are only a part of the reading, inspection and additional clerk hire—will by no means be eliminated in the final showing.

Mr. Clarke suggests that we may make something of a saving per meter by quarterly billing system. So it is intended to tack that on as a rider for universal metering. Whatever we may say about Mr. Daly, we must not forget the fact of metering. After the people had overwhelmingly defeated the quarterly billing system, on his own referendum, he tried to obtain it as a rider on his landlord-pay-the-water-rent measure. Now Mr. Daly, through his engineer, says quarterly billing is to be adopted at all residential electrical fires. We still have for the annual cost of a meter, 48 cents for interest, \$1 for depreciation and \$1 for useless meters, or a total of \$2.48 per meter annually for the 42,584 meters in Portland that are now unmetered.

Does any one for a moment believe that water rates can be lowered when each consumer must meet an added expense of more than 40 cents a year for meters. If they can be, what would be a reasonable water rate, without meters and with the city back again for the metering system is confined to the comparative metering of consumers who, everyone admits, should be on meters. E. T.

RECOGNIZED AFTER MANY YEARS

Value of Alaska, Taken to Oblige Russia, Realized at Last.

PORTLAND, March 16.—(To the Editor.)—The Congress of the United States has authorized the building of a Government railway from a coast point on Prince William Sound, Alaska, to the Yukon Valley, appropriating \$55,000,000. President Blaine has signed the measure, and it is safe to assume the road will be speedily built. Taking a retrospective view, it is not surprising that 20 years ago we arrive at a true appreciation of the importance and utility of the region in the Far North acquired from Russia in 1867. The cost of the road, as compared with that territory, has been estimated not to have exceeded \$100,000,000. It is safe to assume the road will be speedily built. Taking a retrospective view, it is not surprising that 20 years ago we arrive at a true appreciation of the importance and utility of the region in the Far North acquired from Russia in 1867. The cost of the road, as compared with that territory, has been estimated not to have exceeded \$100,000,000.

NO PLAYGROUND PLAN IN MIND

Park Block Not Covered for That Purpose by Shattuck School Patrons.

PORTLAND, Ore., March 16.—(To the Editor.)—I read the communication concerning the Shattuck school site on The Oregonian's editorial page today with considerable interest. This project comes from a lack of information concerning our plans for the school. We are not asking for the Park block for a playground for the school. We are not asking for, nor do we want, the Park block for a playground for the school. We are not asking for, nor do we want, the Park block for a playground for the school. We are not asking for, nor do we want, the Park block for a playground for the school.

FEES FOR NATURALIZATION

PORTLAND, March 16.—(To the Editor.)—Please advise me if an applicant for second citizenship papers can be compelled by the County Clerk to pay a second fee of \$4 because one of his witnesses was disqualified. A READER.

SECURITIES FOR BANK NOTES.

SEAMOKAWA, Wash., March 10.—(To the Editor.)—(1) What securities back United States bank notes accepted by the Government as security for National bank notes? (2) What is the legal time a check may be cashed and the drawer still be responsible? (3) An answer to the above questions will greatly oblige an old subscriber. Yours respectfully, G. L. SILVERMAN.

SPITE AND BARBED WIRE FENCES.

The Editor of The Oregonian (To the Editor.)—Please tell me what constitutes a spite fence. Also, is there a law against barbed wire fences in the city? A SUBSCRIBER.

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COST OF METERS IS FORTHABLY

Writers Figures Up Annual Charge at More Than \$100,000.

PORTLAND, March 16.—(To the Editor.)—Since D. D. Clarke declared in The Oregonian, several days ago, that operation of the water meters in the southeastern district cost only 20 cents per year per meter and deducted from this that the expense for these items would be the same as for the water meters will cost Portland only "20 cents a year each."

Although this is obviously absurd, in hours by many people believe that the meter system will mean an added expense of only 30 cents a year to each family. I think it ought to be made plain what the real cost will be. In the first place "operation and maintenance" does not, of course, include interest. If we are fortunate enough to sell the proposed 4 per cent meter bonds at par, which is extremely unlikely, we would pay at least 48 cents per year interest on the investment. The installation of each meter, which at the lowest figure is placed at \$12.

Then there is the charge for depreciation. It is estimated that the average life of a meter averages not more than 12 years, so we must chalk up \$1 a year per meter for depreciation. Next comes the cost of the billing system. If we do not install meters there is no reason that we may not discontinue the extravagant practice of sending out bills. The billing system annually costs the city 50 cents per meter for stamps alone, but the total cost of the system is about \$60,000, or approximately \$1 per meter, as has been pointed out by a gentleman from the water bureau records.

Now if we add Mr. Clarke's estimate of 20 cents per meter for operation and maintenance, inclusive of the meter, we shall have a very formidable total. But since we do not know exactly what Mr. Clarke's 20 cents per meter is meant to include, let us eliminate it, and forget that we are going to have to pay for repairing, reading and inspecting meters, and for the additional clerical hire. We still have for the annual cost of a meter, 48 cents for interest, \$1 for depreciation and \$1 for useless meters, or a total of \$2.48 per meter annually for the 42,584 meters in Portland that are now unmetered.

Of course this is far too low, for the items here mentioned are only a part of the reading, inspection and additional clerk hire—will by no means be eliminated in the final showing. Mr. Clarke suggests that we may make something of a saving per meter by quarterly billing system. So it is intended to tack that on as a rider for universal metering. Whatever we may say about Mr. Daly, we must not forget the fact of metering. After the people had overwhelmingly defeated the quarterly billing system, on his own referendum, he tried to obtain it as a rider on his landlord-pay-the-water-rent measure. Now Mr. Daly, through his engineer, says quarterly billing is to be adopted at all residential electrical fires. We still have for the annual cost of a meter, 48 cents for interest, \$1 for depreciation and \$1 for useless meters, or a total of \$2.48 per meter annually for the 42,584 meters in Portland that are now unmetered.

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HALF A CENTURY AGO

From The Oregonian of March 17, 1864.

Francis Ely, sentenced to die for desertion, was shot at Fort Walla Walla on the 17th inst. If the telegram has reached the post, it is probable that his life would have been saved, as the President last week commuted the sentence of all deserters under sentence and ordered them to be confined at Fort Leavenworth during the war.

WASHINGTON, March 14.—A grand jury today collected evidence on the Navy stores at Washington by order of Secretary Welles and arrested several clerks and Navy agents to serve as witnesses in the case.

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