

THE OBSERVER

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TAXING OF NOTES.

This year it is compulsory that all notes be taxed, according to a decree issued from the tax board which appears in another column of this paper.

In taxing notes it seems to many that there is a double taxation for the property is first assessed and then the notes which represent any indebtedness on that property are also taxed. But even if double taxation does exist, the question naturally arises which should carry the burden of taxation—the property holder or the note holder.

Regardless of the injustice—if it be an injustice, and it would seem that it is—the order has been made for the assessor to overlook no note, and that order will be lived up to in Union county. Back of the order is a statute which is cause for the action and which should be repealed according to the opinion of a great many people.

It seems that several years ago Oregon had what was known as the mortgage taxation law. Its enforcement meant that every mortgage on property in the state should be taxed. By its enforcement eastern money was driven from Oregon in large amounts and there was some alarm felt by Oregonians. The legislature repealed that part of the statute applying to mortgages, according to history, but overlooked the clause applying to notes. As the note is essence of a mortgage it leaves things in the same shape as formerly.

But the action of the legislature caused many counties to cease taxing notes and for a number of years the statute was treated as dead. Now, however, it has been revived by the tax board and an order made for its enforcement calling every assessor in the state to note the meaning and intent of the measure.

Quite likely the next legislature will adjust this important matter, for there are few people who believe that property should in any way carry a double tax.

A SINGULAR CASE

Where Circumstantial Evidence Played Justice False.

HANGED AN INNOCENT MAN.

Every Incident in the Remarkable Sequence of Events Seemed to Point Conclusively to the Guilt of Harry Blake, Who Was Accused of Murder.

It began in the Blue Horse tavern, on the highway leading to Albany.

Toward the close of an autumn day a half dozen men sat in the old bar-room discussing events which then were leading to the outbreak of the American Revolution. At such a time arguments were very likely to be rather more vigorous than ordinarily would be the case. And this was no exception.

Fearing that trouble might result, one of the men exclaimed: "Come, Wickliffe, stop this. Such a dispute is nonsense."

Wickliffe was an ugly looking fellow, short and stout, with a dark, sallow face, black eyes, low, wrinkled forehead and lips that bared his teeth on occasions like a dog preparing to bite.

"My quarrel is with Harry Blake," he snarled. "It is none of your affair."

"Well, Wickliffe," Blake cried good naturedly, "if you will quarrel, I won't, I'll say no more."

Evidently Wickliffe was bent on trouble, for he muttered something which brought a cry of "Shame!" from every one in the room. Blake's face became deadly pale. "Wickliffe," he said steadily, "I didn't hear what you said, but I dare you to repeat it. If you do and there's one improper word in it, this hour will be the bitterest of your life."

Once more the offensive words were flung at him, and in an instant Blake had seized Wickliffe and thrown him across the room. For a moment he lay stunned, but presently, his face dark with hatred, he rose and, shaking his fist at Blake, exclaimed:

"You may take your measure for a coffin. You will need one."

"Not before you," was Blake's reply. Shortly after the quarrel Wickliffe left the Blue Horse for his home. Blake, whose road lay in the same direction, followed soon. Ten minutes later two more of the loiterers, also going over the highway taken by Wickliffe and Blake, started on their homeward way.

The last two travelers had ridden several miles, talking earnestly of the stirring events which then engaged men's minds, when a loud cry was heard at a little distance. In a moment it was repeated.

"Mercy!" the voice pleaded, and then, "Oh, Harry!"

"Can Blake be settling scores with

Wickliffe?" exclaimed Grayson, one of the two riders.

In a moment they had galloped around a copse of trees at a bend in the road. Within twenty yards of them, on his back in the dust, lay Wickliffe dead. Bending over him stood Blake, grasping a knife driven to the hilt in his bosom.

"Taken red handed," Grayson cried, while Walton, his companion, himself a magistrate, sprang from his horse, exclaiming: "Blake, I charge you with murder."

"Why, I didn't kill him," Blake said earnestly. "You are mad. I found Wickliffe lying dead and was about to pull this knife from the wound when you came up."

Grayson shook his head. "I wish I could believe you, Harry," he said, "but as I hope to be saved I saw you stab him. I did."

It would be hard to imagine a situation more likely to convince a jury of the prisoner's guilt. Conan Doyle in his wildest fancies in deduction never presented more damning evidence to Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson—the epithet resented, the fight, the counter-threat of death, the departure of both while their temper yet was warm and then the terrible tableau on the highway.

What might a man expect even now with the thousand loopholes that the law provides for escape? There could be only one conclusion now, as then, and that conclusion the jury reached without leaving the courtroom. Blake's protestations were vain. He died on the scaffold declaring his innocence.

Three months after the execution the judge who presided at the trial was summoned to Albany to see a prisoner under sentence of death. Grayson, whose testimony chiefly had convicted Blake, also was summoned. Much in wonder, they entered the cell together. "You," the prisoner said to the judge, "presided at the trial of Harry Blake."

"I did."

"And you," turning to Grayson, "swore you saw him stab Wickliffe. On your testimony he was hung."

"I saw Blake stab him," Grayson said.

"You did not," the prisoner sneered, "for I killed Wickliffe. I sprang into the wood at Blake's approach. His story was true."

The confession was so clear and full that it left no doubt in the judge's mind that a fearful wrong had been done Blake. As for Grayson, the chief witness, he committed suicide. The records contain many instances of the law's mistakes, but few so pathetic as the case of Harry Blake.—Kansas City Star.

Method is like packing things in a box. A good packer will get in half as much again as a bad one.—Cecll.

THE ARCTIC PERIL

Peary's Method of Battling With Polar Conditions.

THE USE OF RELAY PARTIES.

Without This System, the Explorer Says, It Would Be a Physical Impossibility For Any Man to Reach the Pole and Return to Tell the Tale.

Many persons who have asked why, if Peary got to the pole, it was impossible for Cook to do so will find an answer in Commander Peary's own story in Hampton's. Although he does not mention Dr. Cook by name, Peary shows how impossible it would be for a man without his equipment and system to surmount the difficulties of such a journey. He says:

"Fortitude and endurance alone are not enough in themselves to carry a man to the north pole. Only with years of experience in traveling those regions, only with the aid of a large party also experienced in that character of work, only with the knowledge of arctic detail and the equipment necessary to prepare himself and his party for any and every emergency, is it possible for a man to reach that long sought goal and return."

"In order that the reader may understand this journey over the ice of the polar sea it is necessary that the theory and practice of pioneer and supporting parties should be fully understood.

"The use of relay parties in arctic work is not new, but the idea was carried further in the last expedition of the Peary Arctic club than ever before.

"Without this system it would be a physical impossibility for any man to reach the north pole and return to tell the tale.

"First.—Because a single division, comprising either a small or a large number of men and dogs, could not possibly drag all the way to the pole and back (some 900 miles) as much food and liquid fuel as the men and dogs of that division would consume during the many weeks of the journey.

"Second.—It is absolutely necessary that the arduous work of trail breaking for the first two-thirds of the distance should be done by one division after another in succession in order

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Third.—When the supplies of one sledge after another have been consumed the drivers of these sledges and the dogs are superfluous mouths which cannot be fed from the scanty supply of provisions being dragged forward over the ice.

Fourth.—Each division being an independent unit, these divisions can be withdrawn at intervals from the main party without affecting the main party.

Fifth.—At the very end, when the supporting parties have performed their important work of trail breaking and transportation of supplies, the main party for the final dash must be small and carefully selected, as a small party can travel so much faster than a large one.

The pioneer party was one unit division, made up of four of the most active and experienced men of the expedition, with sledges lightly loaded with five or six days' provisions, drawn by the best dog teams that could be selected from the entire pack. When we started from Cape Columbia this pioneer party, headed by Bartlett, went out twenty-four hours in advance of the main party. Later on, when we reached the time of continuous daylight and sunlight through the twenty-four hours, the pioneer party was but twelve hours in advance of the main party.

The duty of this pioneer party was to make a march in every twenty-four hours in spite of every obstacle, excepting, of course, some impassable

leas. Whether there was a deep snow or violent winds to be faced or mountainous pressure ridges to be climbed over, the march of the pioneer party must be made, for past experience had proved that whatever distance was covered by the advance party with its light sledges could be covered in less time by the main party even with heavily loaded sledges, because the main party, having the trail to follow, was not obliged to waste time in reconnoitering.

In other words, the pioneer party was the pacemaker of the expedition, and whatever distance it made was the measure of accomplishment for the main party. The leader of the pioneer party, in the first instance Bartlett, would start out ahead of his division, usually of the snowshoes. Then the light sledges of the party would follow after. Thus the leader of the pioneer division was pioneering ahead of his own party, and that whole division was pioneering ahead of the main party.

One great advantage which I had on this expedition was that, owing to the size of my party, whenever the men in this pioneer division became exhausted with their arduous labor and lack of sleep, I could withdraw them into the main party and send out a fresh division to take their place. A large party is absolutely necessary to success."

Narrowing the Field. "I cannot mention names, there are

so many candidates for my hand." "Let 'em hold a primary, then."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

How blunt are the arrows of adversity in comparison with those of guilt!—Blair.

How It Began. And to the Lord old Noah said, "The water now tastes very bad. Because there have been drowned therein all beasts and mankind in their sin. And therefore, Lord, I even think I should prefer some other drink."—New York Times.

Something Pretty. "We women propose to establish a bank. What shall we call it?" "Call it the Shoe and Leather. That's a good solid name." "The idea! Now, we might call it the Ice Cream and Soda Water."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Said the Eyewitness. "Oh, murder! Oh, mother! Two girls with big hats Tried to kiss—Each other!"—Chicago Tribune.

Reportorial. "I am dissatisfied with your account of my discovery," declared the scientist. "I told you that it would be impossible to exaggerate the importance of this discovery." "Well," said the reporter, "I didn't try."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

The Need of Brotherly Love. Like others, I have had to stand in tight and ticklish places. And prayed some friend might send a hand— Say, deuces full of aces. Indianapolis News.

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