

THE OBSERVER

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SAVENESS OF THE FARMERS MOVEMENT.

Following the Farmers' meeting in La Grande, which without doubt is the most important meeting yet held by that organization, the newspapers all over the northwest began to take notice of what was said and done. The saving of over half a million dollars to the farmers of three counties is an item that makes every editor sit up and take notice. Following this interest shown by newspaper men you will notice that a paragraph has crept into the editorial columns here and there commenting upon the movement, and without exception every newspaper has admitted that the margin of profit claimed by the broker is excessive and beyond reason.

This means that the present Farmers' Union is not composed of ranting radicals, as some people might think, neither is it composed of the long haired reformer of years ago. But to the contrary it is made up of a safe element of the producing classes—an element that thinks and reasons, and an element that is willing a fair profit shall be claimed by everyone who handles their products, but who believes that too many handlers now exist and tolls of these handlers are too great.

They are eminently right in their position. What moral right has the grain broker to sit in a steam heated office room with nothing but a typewriter and a telegraph instrument, aside from his desk and exact thousands of dollars each year from the crops raised by men who actually toil and sweat?

In fact the producing class is not nearly as large as it should be today. There are too many brokers, too many middle people handling the farmers' grain and other products. Let the army of non-producers be reduced, for the time is coming when such will be imperative.

REFORMING THE INFORMERS.

Did you notice that J. P. Morgan clipped his hands when Governor Black gave the reformers a job in the city at a dinner party in New York. Well, that means quite a little, but it does not mean that the time will ever come again when the rank and file of the people of this country will carry the banner in a procession and clamor for trade conditions to resume as they once were. No, not even if the "full dinner pail" campaign is resurrected. It will not occur. The large concerns are becoming too powerful and Mr. Morgan will not be able to handle the people to stand by them longer.

And in answer to this some one

says, "but he and his associates will precipitate a panic." That is exactly what they will do and in all probability the worst one the country has ever seen, but even that will not bring the results they demand.

The great work today is to reform the reformer. Most conservative business men, either large or small, will agree that the country has been Roosevelt to death; that La Follette has done a lot of spoiling away with little result, and a number of others are in the same class. These men may have been necessary to start things, just as old John Brown was necessary when the war of the rebellion was started, but when it comes to doing permanent things this country must have a different temperature in its reform element.

Here in Oregon the pendulum has been pushed out of plumb by the alleged reformers until the state is in a most chaotic condition.

not due wholly to the free use of law-making instruments by the people, but should be charged up to the ambitions and unscrupulous reformer who jumps astride anything that is offered to foist his name upon the public and to enable himself or his friend to claim office.

Governor Brady of Idaho can get recognition if he goes into the state of Washington, even if his home folk did refuse to re-elect him. Brady is a suffragist and right now Washington is the hotbed of woman's rights. But who cares whether the ladies worship Brady or not? He may furnish a further excuse for the suffragists to fight over.

The food trust is said to be about ready to turn up its toes to the daisies, which means that for a few days prices may be on a downward trend. At least until some captain of finance devises a way to re-corner the produce and push the price back to where it now is or a little higher.

THE MINISTERS AND POLITICS.

(Indianapolis News.)

It is not easy to define the proper relation of preachers to politics. But there are certain general principles which it seems to us are clear enough. The first is that the church's main business in this world is to develop Christian character. Of course, this often involves the bold rebuking of vice, and it may involve the support of certain specific legislation. In the matter of temperance, for instance, if men were as good as strong as they ought to be, there would be little need for legislation at all. But they are weak, many of them are bad, and all of them are sinful, so it becomes necessary, as far as this can be done, to save them from themselves. The church, however, has a greater and a far more important duty than that, and that is so to train and develop men, so fill them with new and divine life, that they shall be able to save themselves.

Another general principle is that the church ought to treat all forms of vice and lawlessness on the same basis. And this brings us to the remarks made yesterday by the Rev. G. E. Hiller before the Methodist ministers' association. In particular we desire to commend the following paragraph:

"We can accomplish more by confining ourselves more strictly to

teaching religion. If we try to get laws passed we are taking on ourselves responsibilities not commanded by the Master. The trusts are breaking the law, and so are the saloonkeepers and the brewers. Many Christians who vote against the saloons fail to return their full property for taxation, and church members are breaking the laws in various ways. Under these conditions it is amusing to the prince of darkness for us to be continually shooting off resolutions against lawbreakers. We are like Martha; we are loading ourselves down with many things that God has not commanded us to take up. God will hold the lawmakers responsible for their acts, and He will hold us responsible for preaching His Word."

It greatly weakens the influence of the minister to denounce sins to which neither he nor those who hear him are prone, and to be silent in regard to those to which both are, or may be, prone. And that is precisely the course which many ministers take. The churches are, as Mr. Hiller intimates, the homes of very many men who never think of making an honest tax return—who actually commit perjury to avoid paying their just dues to the state. The sins of the rich have been very vigorously exploited in the last few years, but the church has had little to say about them. We would not have the ministers join the muck-raking crowd, but surely they should do something in the way of applying the eternal law to the lives of their own fellow members. The great trusts are, for the most part, managed and controlled by men who call themselves Christians. Mr. Ryan, for instance, is a member of the Roman Catholic church; Mr. Rockefeller is a Baptist, while Mr. Morgan is often referred to as "the most conspicuous layman" of the Protestant Episcopal church. These men, and others like them, would be none the worse for a little closer spiritual oversight on the part of their respective churches.

It does not require any considerable amount of courage to attack a saloon. It is even now a sort of outcast. But the saloonkeeper is not the only lawbreaker; not, in our opinion, the worst or most dangerous lawbreaker. Indeed, there are worse people than even the lawbreakers, namely, those who legislate for their own interests and pervert the law to their own advantage. Politically the worst thing about the liquor interests is that they do just that. What we have to fear in this country is, not so much that one class will prey on another—for something of that there always will be—as that the people will lose respect for and confidence in the law. Therefore the main effort nowadays, should be, not to get new laws so much as to see to it that those which we have are honestly enforced and loyally obeyed. We need a change of mind and heart, such a change as makes us see that a violation of the anti-trust law is as great a sin as the selling of liquor after hours. That men do not now see this is largely due to the fact that moral standards have been lowered and moral preceptions dulled. Only the other day the Attorney-General made his annual report, and in that he showed what an amazing amount of rascality there had been in the last year. Fraud and stealing have been seen everywhere. After reading that report many people must have asked themselves whether we really are a nation of scoundrels. And yet this is a Christian land. Has the church lost its power? That is a question which must, we think, cause much searching of heart among the ministers.

It seems to us that Mr. Hiller spoke with great wisdom. As we have said it is no easy matter to say precisely what should be the relation of the minister to politics, to the actual business of legislation. But one thing is certain, and that is that the church will not win back the confidence which it has to a certain extent lost as long as it refuses or fails to put trust lawlessness in the same category with saloon lawlessness. Reform ought to begin within its own household. When it has cast the beam from its eyes it will be able to see clearly the mote that is in the eyes of the people outside. It is no bad idea to look outside of ourselves for what is bad. The contrary method is too often the one that is followed. The question is not whether or not a minister shall be brave, for the coward has no place in a Christian pulpit. The question is as to how to make the influence of the minister most helpful and effective.

West's Annual Sale News

Our Thirteenth Saving Event a Great Success--Read These Items

MEN'S DEPT. CROWDED WITH BARGAINS

No matter what you need, whether it be Hat, Cap, Hosiery, Underwear, Suit or Overcoat you can save a good margin if you will come in and buy it during the next two weeks. Our line of Benjamin and Sincerity Suits and Kenyon Overcoats are reduced from one-fourth to one-third below regular price.

STARTLING PRICES ON MEN'S SHOES

We're selling one lot of men's shoes for \$1.50 that formerly sold for \$3.00 and \$3.50. Another line that was \$4.00 and \$5.00 are now to be closed out at \$2.50. Boy's Shoes that sold for \$2.25 to \$3.25 are going first at \$1.25 and \$1.50 a pair.

AN EXTRAORDINARY SALE IN LADIES' SUIT DEPT.

With Every Garment in the store reduced to the very lowest price, some way below the manufacturer's cost, buying has been brisk despite the stormy weather. One of the most important events in this Annual Sale is the Clearance of Muslin Underwear in the Millinery Dept. When you visit this Sale be sure and take advantage of this saving event on muslin. Remember there is a reduced price on every article in the store.

THIS SALE LASTS UNTIL JAN. 31st ONLY! Better Come in Today

ANNUAL SAVING EVENT IN DRY GOODS DEPT.

This Opportunity happens but once a year and economical buyers have come to look forward to this Sale for months. For thirteen years this sale has been the one big bargain event of the year. You will find the same high quality merchandise priced as low as many charge for inferior goods. You had better buy now for months to come.

A SURPRISE IN LADIES AND MISSES SHOES

90c a pair is the price on one lot of Ladies' shoes worth to \$2.50 a pair. \$1.19 for Misses' School Shoes that formerly sold from \$2.00 to \$2.50 a pair. There are many other lines reduced just as low. You will find all sizes and styles.

N. K. West The Quality Store

Directory of the Fraternal Orders of La Grande, Oregon

- A. F. & A. M.—La Grande Lodge No. 41, A. F. & A. M. holds regular meetings first and third Saturdays at 7:30 p. m. Cordial welcome to all Masons. JOHN S. HODGIN, W. M. A. C. WILLIAMS, Secretary.
REBEKAHS—Crystal Lodge No. 50 meets every Tuesday evening in the I. O. O. F. hall. All visiting members are invited to attend. MRS. KATIE ARBUCKLE, N. G. MISS ANNA ALEXANDER, Sec.
KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS—Red Cross Lodge No. 27 meets every Monday night in Castle hall, (old Elk's hall). A Pythian welcome to all visiting Knights. JESS PAUL, C. C. R. L. LINCOLN, M. of R. & S.
O. E. S.—Hope Chapter No. 13, O. E. S. holds stated communications the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Visiting members cordially invited. MARY A. WARNICK, Sec. PAULINE EDERLEE, W. M.
WOODMEN OF THE WORLD—La Grande Lodge No. 169 W. O. W. meets every second and fourth Tuesday in the month. All visiting members welcome. NERI ACKLES, C. C. J. H. KEENEY, Clerk.
M. W. A.—La Grande Camp No. 7703 meets every Monday in the month at the I. O. O. F. hall. All visiting neighbors are cordially invited to attend. I. R. SNOOK, C. D. E. COX, Clerk.
WOMEN OF WOODCRAFT—Grande Ronde Circle No. 47 meets every first and third Thursday evenings in the month at the I. O. O. F. hall. All visiting members are welcome. CHLOE ROBINSON, G. M. LIZZIE ELLSWORTH, Clerk.

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LA GRANDE, OREGON.

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