

THE OBSERVER

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VICIOUS MR. HOCKENBERRY

The open letter by Mr. Hockenberry to the Portland Oregonian, which was reprinted in the Evening Observer last night, appears to be full of viciousness showing the selfish side of the writer. Like a great many public men in Oregon Mr. Hockenberry is not a good loser.

His son, who is an architect, tried to obtain the position which the La Grande school board named Mr. Gaunt to fill. Both the son and the sire were disappointed; very much so. Now, when Gaunt appears in the Portland school matters, Professor Hockenberry sees an opportunity not only to punish Gaunt but to drive a few partially covered thrusts into the board of education of La Grande. All of which discredits Professor Hockenberry in this, his old home, and shows his nature to be that of extreme narrowness interwoven with a selfish mesh that is deeplicable in the eyes of men possessing red blood.

So far as Mr. Gaunt personally is concerned this paper has no disposition to offer defense. He is not the kind of a man that anyone can very well recommend. But the building he designed in La Grande is in no way what Professor Hockenberry claims it is. There may be a few things about the handsome structure that could be changed to advantage. Few buildings have ever been erected that such was not the case, but as a whole the La Grande school building is first class. The feature of Hockenberry's tirade that is resented most of all however, is the indirect attack made upon the men who comprise the board of education in this city. When he even intimates that graft or criminal negligence has marked the course of Judge Knowles, Jack Watson, Mr. Brenholts, Mr. Henson, S. N. Bolton or Mr. Bay the Evening Observer, along with the populace of the city, resents the statement most earnestly. We defy the learned profession to come to La Grande and find a semblance of graft in the new school building; we

defy him by comparison to show that the city has not a first class building and last we defy him to return to La Grande and claim again the long list of men who have been his friends but who now realize the smallness of his makeup and choose to waste no more time on such an individual.

It is an easy matter for Professor Hockenberry to pen a few lines to a metropolitan paper charging graft, especially when he is in a fit of jealous rage. But it is another thing for him to come to La Grande and prove the allegations.

Come, Professor Hockenberry, come to La Grande and make good your statements else be branded by those whom you have known for years as an unsafe man and a man who lets his petty jealousies overcome his better judgment.

"NOT UNDERSTOOD"

Did you ever read the poem entitled "Not Understood?" Well, there is something in that poem that reminds one of the Merchants' Protective Association of La Grande. A well meaning individual passes through life not understood. His heart is good, his principle is better and yet he is misunderstood by all.

The Merchants' Protective association is organized along broad lines. There is never such a thing as a price mentioned at a meeting; there is never anything done to allay competition; the main purpose is to establish credit for men who pay their bills and to refuse credit to those who do not. Yet the general public misunderstands this body of men.

When merchants meet to combine on prices they deserve criticism for competition is the legitimate life of trade. But when they meet merely to protect themselves against loss there is absolutely nothing wrong, and they are doing the general public a kindness. If the bad debts could be eliminated it would make a difference in the cost of goods, for the world over adopts a rule of a certain per cent of bad debts and this per cent is borne by those who do pay their bills.

Rather than criticize the Protective association it should be encouraged by every honest man, for this one reason if no other. It means dollars and cents to honest people of the poor pay patron can be eradicated. Just as long as the association attends to credits and does attempt to combine on prices, it is a splendid thing for the community. And to our knowledge there has never been a disposition shown to mention prices at an association meeting.

BERLIN VERSUS CHICAGO.

(Butte Evening News)

Berlin is a fine city. That is, Berlin, one of the most beautiful cities of the world, is deeply concerned in the Chicago plans for beautification.

The German Kaiser is ambitious to make his capital the finest city in the world, and seizes every suggestion and every opportunity to promote its grandeur and perfection. Last summer he was thoroughly stirred up by the plans for the improvement and beautification of Chicago, which were prepared several years ago by Daniel H. Burnham and Edward H. Bennett, and are now under the direction of the

Commercial club, and inspired by them he has appointed a commission to prepare similar plans for the city of Berlin, based upon the future population of 10,000,000 in the year 2000.

In his enthusiastic and impulsive way the Kaiser declared several times that the Burnham plans were the most perfect and satisfactory he had ever seen, and expressed a profound regret that his capital is so solidly built up and lacks the lake frontage of Chicago, so that they cannot be applied more closely in the improvements he contemplates.

A SALUTARY CHANGE.

(Boston Globe.)

The new policy of the postoffice department to arrest and try those who use the mails for swindling purposes, instead of allowing them to go free with a reprimand or slight fine, is a wise one.

Under the old order of things a man who was put out of business by what is known as a fraud order might very easily move into another building and begin his work over again under another bogus company. Under the system now in vogue by the department, its man is convicted of using the mails to defraud, his postal address for a few years following will be in the care of the warden of some penitentiary, according to Postmaster General F. H. Hitchcock.

The department inspectors have become familiar with the methods of the mail swindlers. There is no doubt that many millions of dollars are gathered by these fraudulent concerns. But they can be suppressed if the government carries out its present plans.

LENDING IMPETUS TO THE GOOD CAUSE.

(Baltimore News)

With a deadlock over the United States Senatorships in New York, Massachusetts, New Jersey and West Virginia, is there any wonder that the people have come to believe they can make a better job of it than their accredited representatives? They have become tired of the incessant interruption of business which such struggles cause, of the scandals which so frequently ensue, of the assumption of some vulgar boss of the right to bestow the honor to his own advantage. But the most convincing of all arguments, perhaps, in favor of a change, is the repeated demonstration that a legislature will name a man the suggestion of whom, prior to election, would defeat the party that elected him.

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Wright Drug Comp'ny

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