

THE OBSERVER

BRUCE DENNIS Editor and Owner.

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THE SEWER QUESTION.

Last night the city council wrestled with the question of sewer pipe until nearly midnight. The question is whether 30-inch pipe shall be laid according to specifications, or whether 24-inch pipe shall be laid.

Arcade THEATRE

RELYING ON QUALITY OF PICTURES.

- 'Slim Jim's Last Chance'... Kalem
'Enemies'... Pathe
'Lost and Won'... Selig
'Patsime in Chili'... Scenes in a bull ring in Valparaiso.

of freight rates and the other in Spokane.

Why, then, is 30-inch pipe specified? It seems that a man by the name of Kelsey drew the specifications for La Grande and several other cities of the northwest and in each he placed 30-inch pipe for sewer work.

Did Mr. Kelsey know that only one firm on the coast made that size pipe? Was he aware of what is now alleged—that 30-inch pipe is not accepted as a standard length of pipe? If so, why did he specify that size?

The council is not supposed to be familiar with technicalities relative to sewer pipe. There is not one citizen in 5,000 who knows whether 30-inch is standard or 24-inch is standard, and where either is manufactured and the relative merit.

Full confidence has been reposed in the man who drew the specifications and as a result there is contention and a wrangle.

Councilmen will ordinarily want to stick to specifications because ordinarily that would be the thing to do. Yet, it seems the specifications contain a joker and if so, the action should be speedy in making the change because this city wants the best to be obtained for its money expended.

If proof can be produced, and it is asserted that it can be, that the 30-inch pipe is non-standard; that it is not of as good quality as the 24, then there should be no hesitation about changing the specifications.

Plans and specifications on public work are a good deal like the constitution of a state and should not be changed only where there is no chance for mistake, but in this case it may be that the change is essential. Let the council meet again and re-consider the matter, and when that meeting occurs let each member lay aside every feeling other than to pass as an unprejudiced jury upon the quality of the sewer pipe. Let the proof on each side be submitted and extreme caution mark the verdict.

This may seem out of order to the councilmen, but the taxpaying public of La Grande will not think so. The people of this city want and demand extreme care in all preliminary work that marks the expenditure of thousands of dollars of their money. They are patient and fair, but they have arrived at the point of demanding the best they can buy with their dollars.

So far as the contractor, Mr. Sutherland, is concerned, there is no disposition on the part of any of the councilmen to "make things easy" for him, and so far as we understand the case he asks no such favor, but without considering him in the least this pipe question should be settled in a way to benefit the people—who are paying the expense.

THE COMMUNITY.

Communities, like men, are subject to certain ailments and diseases. They suffer from lack of financial nutrition and resulting retarded growth; from set rick quick fevers and business somnolence; from lack of harmony and co-operation among the citizens and from the ever active enemy of progress—plain laziness.

Wherever men go their medical advisers are found—a recognition of the weakness of the individual body. But the need of a doctor for the community is not as generally appreciated.

Many a town is down with the sleeping sickness and does not know it. Many a village needs a tonic to awaken its business men and show them the opportunities that are literally in their way.

As a diagnostician and adviser for the community, there is but one successful practitioner—old Dr. Commercial club. Sometimes he goes by another name, such as Board of Trade or Progress association, but his identity is the same, his function is all important, and if he has reasonable support his patients generally come out all right.

The size of a community and its location matter little. It may be a suburb of a big city and it may be the center of a farming district or of a mining section. Whatever its status may be, if it supports any kind of legitimate business its merchants, professional men and manufacturers should pool their energy for the good of the community. This is nothing but local patriotism and it is a type of practical patriotism that invariably is productive of better conditions.

It is time for a national awakening of the progressive spirit which is so largely fostered by these organizations.

There is nothing so inspiring of confidence as co-operative effort among business men who realize their individual weakness and their combined strength.

The present is far better than the future as a time for careful analysis of the community's needs, weaknesses and possibilities. Such analysis will furnish a basis for constructive work.

EXPERIMENTAL FARMS.

At present the country around Bend is advocating the installation of an experimental station so that newcomers may learn how to farm in that district. The idea is a good one, but if put in practice too much must not be expected of the station in the way of education of the people. Union county has had an experimental farm for years, and one of the best in the United States, yet there is not the interest shown in it that one would think.

At the farm, which is located near Union, the problems of farming in Eastern Oregon are absolutely solved. The best grains are propagated and information relative to crops is obtainable. Strange to say, few people take advantage of the station to learn. Men it would seem would rather go along in the old beaten path, trusting to luck and precedent than to take up proven methods of advancement which are certain to make them more money. Why this is true has not been solved, but it remains a fact. At what is called "Farmers' Day" at the station last year there was but a very small per cent of the farmers of Eastern Oregon present and the lecture and demonstrations were of untold value to every man who owns a farm.

So, if the people of Bend are counting on great results immediately from a station they will be disappointed, not because the station will not make good, but for the simple reason that people will not take the proper interest in it.

The paving company is on its last stretch of work for the present, although there is quite a sentiment among property owners in different sections of the city for hard surface. La Grande has taken a decided step forward and will probably rest for a year until she gets her second wind.

Governor West may find considerable sport attached to capturing paroled prisoners, for it will be remembered that when he was Railroad Commissioner West he enjoyed taking "hikes" across the country with a hatchet testing railroad ties.

Did it ever occur to you that in the future when a stranger enters La Grande and wants a rental property the first question will be: "Is it located on a paved street and has it cement sidewalks?"

The best thing to do with "See," the abductor and teacher of a new whim, is to hang him by the neck until he is dead, dead, dead. And this paper is not very much in favor of capital punishment, either.

The great celebration in La Grande is coming along in fine shape. Make your plans to come and celebrate here also to see the aviation meet on July 8th and 9th and attend the Chautauqua.

The argument now in the mind of the pedestrian: Which is the easier

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N. K. WEST THE QUALITY STORE

route to the court house — Fourth street or Sixth street. Many are taking the Sixth street route.

A King Who Could Change the Wind. King Ericus of Sweden publicly confessed that he was a sorcerer and magician. He was the owner of an enchanted cap, which he pretended enabled him to control the spirits and change the direction of the winds at pleasure.

Not Carrying It. An Irishman met with an accident, but was only away from work two days. "Why didn't you stay home for a week?" a friend asked him. "You were carrying an insurance policy, weren't you?" "I was not," said the Irishman. "The day of the accident I left it home in the bureau drawer."

Synonym. "Say," asked Conkley, looking up from the letter he was writing, "do you know any expression that means the same as 'talking shop'?" "Well," replied Joakley, "there is 'tonorial emporium' and likewise 'hair cutting parlor.'"—Catholic Standard and Times.

Explaining It. Mrs. Posey—Mercy, Hiram! Them awful society women dress like they was goin' swimmin'. Mr. Posey—O' course, Jerusha. Hain't you heard th't in th' soshul swim th' wimmen try to outstrip each other?—Milwaukee News.

As Usual. Jokely—I got a batch of aeroplane jokes ready and sent them out last week. Boggs—What luck did you have with them? Jokely—Oh, they all came flying back.—Lippincott's.

Sensitive. Stranger (in Pittsburg)—Do you have aldermen at large in this city? Native (irritably)—Oh, try that stuff in vaudeville!—Puck.

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