

THE OBSERVER

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DON'T BE AN IBEX.

A contributor to the Saturday Evening Post has invented a new name for a mossback—Ibex, which leads to the following adaptation from his article by the Roseburg Review:

Assuming that a mossback, or Ibex, is a typical Roseburger—which, of course, he isn't—but assuming for the sake of argument that he is, there is at once a striking difference between a typical Roseburger and a typical resident of any other Oregon city that is growing rapidly, such as Eugene, to take a fair example of the Willamette valley, or Medford on the south or Hood River, or La Grande in Eastern Oregon, say. Catch a Medford or a Eugene man at a banquet or on a sleeping car, at a funeral or at a wedding, or anywhere, and barely mention—just barely whisper the name of his town. That's his cue; he's off then, telling you how much it increased in population in the last ten years and how much more it is going to increase

in the next ten, and how many new factories have started up and how many new buildings have been built during the past six months, and how many new buildings have been built during the past six months, and how many miles of new sidewalks have been built this fall, and how much pavement has been laid; what fine climate they have and what fine fruit they can raise. He has all the available figures right where he can put his fingers on them. His pockets are loaded with statistics and he hauls them out by the handful and sprinkles them over you like confetti at a carnival.

You may begin to wish, after an hour or two, that he would change the subject and talk about Russian dancers or the newest white hope or some other thing; but, in any event you are impressed with the fact that the place he comes from is quite some place, and that heaven, with a few modern improvements, would be something like it—only, of course, heaven has't anything like the fruit they raise and the climate they have. He is organized to boost his town first, last and all the time. Speak slightly of him and you may get away with it; but raise your voice against his town and it would exceedingly behoove you to be good at one of two things—fighting or running.

In regard to the Roseburg person we were speaking of a moment or two ago however, it is different. He has all the sense of local pride that an anglerworm has. Mention to him the large and no doubt gratifying growth in Roseburg's population as shown by the recent census, and he says, stifling a yawn, that figures never interested him particularly; but if it is true, then something ought to be done right away to keep these rubes from swarming in and taking all the good snaps. Direct his attention to the figures of Roseburg's gross business in a year and he remarks, wearily: "Yes, it has been a fair season for the moving picture shows." Complain to him of some crying municipal evil and ask him what he thinks ought to be done about it, and he thinks probably you had better call a policeman. Aim a bitter jeer at Roseburg and he shows no heat whatsoever—but hand him one little short-arm personal jolt—just one—and you certainly will get his goat—pardon me, his Ibex.

There is no necessity for a person being an Ibex, even under the most adverse conditions. For an example read the following:

"Once there was a cyclone that hit a town in Arkansas and turned it inside out. It wasn't one of those little one-ring cyclones that are here today and gone tomorrow. It was a three-ring and elevated stage cyclone, with a hippodrome track and a street parade three miles long, traveling with its own private besom of destruction. It did all the things that one of those orthodox old-line southwestern cyclones naturally would do. It was immediately preceded by a swallow-tailed bolt of lightning, which completely undressed a prominent citizen, hung his clothes, neatly pressed, over the top limb of an adjacent tree, and branded him on the stomach with William Jennings Bryan's initials, and passed into the earth with a loud roaring sound and a smell like somebody

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trying ham. Then the main attraction came along and proceeded to act up something scandalous. It blew julep straws through the three-foot brick side of a distillery; it removed the paper from the walls and left the pictures hanging there; it speared the hovel and smote the palace, and it fell upon that well-known Arkansas democrat who swore never to shave until Samuel J. Tilden was president and mowed all the everglades off one side of his face, but left the rest of his bosage comparatively untouched. And then it moved on to the next stand, leaving that town looking as though it ought to be reshuffled and dealt over again.

"In the course of a few hours the editor of the leading home paper — there was but one—dug himself out from under several tons of plastering and laths and unpaid subscriptions and suchlike flotsam and jetsam; and, after he had excavated a lone printer and a crippled press and a stickful of type, and one thing and another, he got out an extra, giving the main details. As extras go, this wasn't such an extra extra, but across the front page, in the biggest font of type the editor could resurrect, ran the lines so satisfying to local pride: "Hicksville Devastated by the Biggest Storm That Ever Hit a Town This Size."

"Twelve Dead, and the Wind Blew Eight Miles an Hour Faster Here Than It Did in the St. Louis Cyclone."
Now that's the kind of an editor that lived in Hicksville, Arkansas. You can find them in Roseburg or Eugene or Medford or La Grande—but he wouldn't have sulted a mossback—I mean an Ibex—not a minute. The appropriate for such an affair to him would have been a headline reading something like this: "Bingville Wiped Off the Map — 12 Lives Lost."
"Fruit Trees Uprooted and Orchards Ruined; Crops Devastated; Hard Times Ahead."

The moral to this story is obvious.

An Illinois farmer shipping stock to Chicago, succeeded in crowding 150 large hogs into one car, and is now open to offers from street railway companies, who would appreciate his services as a conductor.

To make telephone conversation more audible, a Danish banker has hit

upon the expedient of heating the transmitter. In this country the language used frequently does that.

If you call a grape fruit, would it be right to Cauliflower fruitless?

DICKENS ANNIVERSARY TODAY

It is just one hundred years ago today that Charles Dickens, the English novelist, was born. Dickens is such a warm and one might say, personal, friend of so many La Grande perusers of standard literature, that it is not amiss to enumerate some of the important events in the author's life. Here are some of the most important incidents in Dickens' career:

1812—Charles John Huffham Dickens born at Portsea, near Portsmouth the son of John Dickens, a clerk at the Portsmouth dockyard.

1816—Removed with his parents to Chatham, where he resided until 1821 when the family removed to London.

1827—At the age of 15, with the advantage of less than three years at school, he began life on his own account as a clerk in a solicitor's office.

1828—After a year in the solicitor's office where he acquired the intimate knowledge of law and lawyers that he afterward used to good advantage in his famous novels, young Dickens became a law reporter.

1831—At the age of 19, he found employment as a parliamentary reporter, in which occupation he displayed great efficiency.

1833—Wrote a slight sketch entitled "A Dinner at Poplar Walk," his first essay in the realm of literature.

1836—At the age of 24, he published the opening parts of "The Pickwick Papers," the work which was to make him famous.

Married Miss Catherine Hogarth, daughter of George Hogarth, publisher of the Evening Chronicle, to which

Dickens contributed his first sketches. 1840—At the age of 28, he had completed "Oliver Twist," "Nicholas Nickleby," "The Old Curiosity Shop" and "Harnaby Rudge."

1841—Paid his first visit to America. 1843—At age of 31, he had written "Martin Chuzzlewit" and the first of his Christmas books.

1847—At the age of 35, he had completed "Domey and Son" and four more of his famous Christmas books.

1849—At the age of 37, he had completed "David Copperfield," which is regarded by many critics as the greatest of his works.

1853—At the age of 41, he completed "Bleak House," which is famous for the excellent construction of its plot and has retained its place as one of Dickens' best efforts.

1854—At the age of 42, he had completed "Hard Times."

1857—At the age of 45, he had completed "Little Dorrit."

1859—At the age of 47, he had completed "A Tale of Two Cities," and one of the most powerful of his works.

1862—At the age of 50, he completed

"Great Expectations," one of the most characteristically humorous of his works.

1866—At the age of 54, he completed "Our Mutual Friend."

1867—At the age of 55, he arrived in America to begin a lecture tour in which he appeared in many principal cities and was received everywhere with the greatest cordiality and enthusiasm.

1868—At the age of 56, he returned to England in failing health, having depleted his strength by hard work and the excitement incident to his American tour.

1869—At the age of 57, he began writing "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," which he did not live to complete.

1870—At the age of 58, on the evening of June 9, the great writer breathed his last at "Gad's Hill Place" his home in Kent not far from Rochester, which he had purchased in 1856.

1870—On June 14, the remains were laid to rest in Westminster abbey. In accordance with Dickens' own often-expressed feelings in the matter, the funeral was strictly private.

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