

THE OBSERVER

BRUCE DENNIS, Editor and Owner

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LA GRANDE'S OPPORTUNITY.

The state organization of the Farmers' Union, which also includes Southern Idaho, has decided to meet in La Grande next December in annual session. This will bring to this city the prominent farmers who are today working early and late with their minds as well as their hands, and one of their pronounced efforts is to solve the problem of marketing produce grown on the lands.

At the Union's meeting this subject will be discussed by men who have made earnest research and the findings will be laid before the convention.

It is La Grande's opportunity to entertain the Farmers' Union as it never was entertained before. There is nothing too good for the producer, and the privilege of living them here rarely will instill in every citizen a desire to make the event the biggest thing that has happened in the Farmers' Union since it was organized.

COST OF THE MONROE DOCTRINE

This country would do well, according to a writer in the June number of the Atlantic Monthly, to notify the world that it no longer holds to the Monroe doctrine. The man giving this unusual advice is Hiram Bingham, a member of the faculty of Yale university, and an authority on the economics, politics and geography of South America.

His view is that the Monroe doctrine only has brought on us the hatred and distrust of Latin America. Our motives, he says, are openly questioned. In fact, the alliance of the Argentine republic, Brazil and Chile, popularly known as "the A. B. C. group," has for its definite purpose opposition to what is accepted as this country's policy of self-aggrandizement.

the guardianship thus proclaimed was welcome. Now it only serves to infuriate the proud Latins.

The small countries which chronically disturb the peace on this side of the world might be corrected more easily, in Prof. Bingham's opinion, by concerted action on the part of the United States and the leading South American countries. By an alliance of this kind we would assume no superiority over our neighbors and by accepting equality would be in a much better position to maintain their friendship and good will.

The Monroe doctrine has been such a leading article in the national confession of faith that today it is held as a cardinal principle. Yet recent events in Central America have opened the country's eyes to some of its disadvantages. As the complications arising from its applications thicken we may be more ready to consider adjusting it to changed conditions.

DEFECTIVE CHILDREN.

The great work to be done in the interests of school children was never more apparent than it is made through statistics gathered for the international congress of school hygiene, to be held in Buffalo in August.

It is declared that of the 20,000,000 school children enrolled in the United States, fully 15,000,000 are in need of attention on account of medical defects. Dr. Thomas H. Wood, professor of physical education at Columbia university, has made the following classification of our 20,000,000 school children:

About 5 per cent or 1,000,000 have spinal curvature, flat foot or some other moderate deformity serious enough to interfere to some degree with health.

About 5 per cent, or 1,000,000 have defective hearing. About 25 per cent, or 5,000,000 have defective vision. About 25 per cent or 5,000,000 are suffering from malnutrition, in many cases due in part at least to one or more of the other defects enumerated.

Over 30 per cent, or 6,000,000 have enlarged tonsils, adenoids, or enlarged cervical glands which need attention. Over 50 per cent, or 10,000,000 (in some schools as high as 98 per cent) have defective teeth, which are interfering with health.

The amount of time lost of educators in attempting to teach these children regular lessons; the danger to which these children are exposed and the danger to which all children are exposed in the class rooms through contagious diseases, the constant suffering of this enormous number of school children from defective vision, defective hearing, from defective breathing and from other ailments; the great injury which is resulting from bad seating, from poor lighting, poor ventilation, and bad sanitation—these are a few of the topics which will come up for discussion at the

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forthcoming congress. It is hoped that this congress will advise measures which will be the basis of reform shortly to be carried into all the individual communities of the United States, if not indeed to all those countries of the world in which special attention is being paid to the welfare of the child and the community.

VACATION OR VOCATION SCHOOLS?

The United States bureau of education in a recent bulletin predicts that children in at least 150 American cities will continue going to school during the summer months this year. Clarence Arthur Perry, in a publication issued by the Russell Sage foundation, finds that 141 municipalities reported vacation schools in one or more buildings in 1912 and that undoubtedly there would be more this year. There is a movement on foot in New York City to have all night colleges and the evening schools have come to be looked upon as essential to every well regulated system of public schools. The scramble for knowledge is constantly gaining impetus and one wonders where it will all end. Will the time come when men of letters must supply the vacancies left by the laborers who have dropped their shovels to acquire the higher education? Some of them even are doing it now. If all of the people are to become giants intellectually who will per- form the manual tasks if not a fair share of these same intellectual giants?

But men who have earned their bread by the sweat of their brow are averse to having their children follow in their footsteps. Realizing their own shortcomings, they work a little longer and a little harder each day that their offspring may be supplied with knowledge equipping them for lighter tasks. The second generation goes a step farther and looks forward to a professional career for their children and thus the movement goes on. The professional men of today are working in an overcrowded field and while two decades ago the profession itself was a sufficient guarantee of success in life, today it is only the exceptional man in the profession, who can afford the luxuries. The others, peg along, satisfied to be merely existing, or leave their professions for which they are trained to seek wealth in fields for which they are untrained.

In nine out of ten instances the parent chooses a career for the child and it is not oftentimes a career to the latter's liking. In the tenth instance the child chooses a career of which he knows little until he has gone too far to turn back. There is large room for doubt as to the wisdom of the present methods of educating the children. The youth of today who leaves the high school has his brain crammed full of theories and so little practical information

that he must forget a large part of what he has learned before there is room in his brain for the knowledge that will prove of value to his employer. The school training that he has received has practically all been preparatory to a college training and proportionately only a few of even the high school pupils eventually go to college.

Vocational training would be of far greater benefit to them. An insight into business or the trades would put them in a better position to choose their life work and would at least in a measure equip them to face a world that is none too kind. Vocational training has been making advances but not with such strides as it should. A few cities have made it a part of the curriculum of their schools but is a side issue rather than a principal branch of school work.

Let the vacation schools go on. They will fill a humanitarian need in keeping children off the city streets and that was the original purpose of the promoters, but in preparing the course of subjects to be taught let some heed be given to the deficiencies of the regular courses and provide the rising generation with an insight into what is before them in life, and how to cope with it.

KEEPING IN THE SWIM.

The fear of being called a "tightwad" colors the whole life and dictates most of the actions of the average American, says Col. Henry Waterson.

The truth of his assertion no one can dispute. Few of us can deny a share of the general weakness. We are afraid of being suspected of stinginess. Consequently we buy things we don't need and do many things we don't really want to do just because our neighbors do.

What "they will say" is the bugaboo in many a home. Yet what do "they" do for one? When the strain of "keeping up appearances" finally causes bankruptcy where are the friends of days of plenty? Somewhere else.

It would be good for all of us if we thought less of "they" and more of plain "us." This is not selfishness. It is common sense. We are put in this world to live our own lives in our own way provided that in doing so we disturb no one else in the same right. By bowing down before this false idol of "they" we shackles ourselves in the most galling of chains.

Because what "they will say" is so much an unwritten law in this country we see the least little people who would be perfectly happy and comfortable if they lived within their means anything but happy. Families on \$25 or \$30 a week aspire to own automobiles. Men who ought to be buying homes belong to fashionable clubs. Women well able to do their own work keep maids. The well-to-do try to emulate the very rich in enter-

tainment and display. Many who would be healthier and stronger for walking a mile or so to the place of employment take street cars. Families that would be stranded if wages stopped for a week fritter away countless nickels and dimes in theatres, motion pictures and excursion.

We want to stand well with our friends and neighbors and we foolishly think the way to do it is "to keep in the swim." But incomes are not like rubber bands; they won't stretch. And in trying to please everybody we please nobody. The right kind of friends do not call one stingy for trying to live within one's means.

An Illinois farmer lost all of his hair and whiskers by lightning. It is to be hoped nothing of the kind ever

happens to Senator Jim F. Lewis of that state.

New Jersey man shot at a crow and brought down an eagle, but that is nothing for a New Jerseyite. One of them shot at the governorship and brought down the presidency.

Paris has a hotel without servants, which seems to be the only way to solve the tipping problem.

The Wilson administration certainly believes in boosting the business of the grape growers.

Ever buy books on contract? Never got settled up, did you?

Who steals our cubist picture steals trash.

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La Grande National Bank La Grande, Oregon

Capital, \$100,000.00 Surplus, \$130,000.00 Resources, 1,100,000.00

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