

THE OBSERVER

BRUCE DENNIS, Editor and Owner

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ELIMINATING ARMY POLITICS

A year or two ago the magazines were greatly agitated over the question, "What's the matter with the army?" Officers of high rank, retired secretaries and others, contributed to the controversy. Everybody seemed agreed that "something was wrong." Perhaps a recent order issued by Secretary of War Garrison may help explain a part of the trouble. Mr. Garrison has undertaken to stop politicians from meddling with affairs of the army, and to this end he has prohibited the employment of political aid in behalf of army officers for assignment to duty or for appointment to higher positions.

Every employee of a business concern has, perhaps, actual acquaintance with that mysterious force known as "office politics." To those unacquainted with its operation it may be explained at the exercise of "pull" nurtured by ambition and petty jealousy. What "office politics" is to the office force "promotion politics" is to the army. And there is scarcely an army officer or a man in official life at Washington but has an idea of the operation of politics in the army. It has in the past been no uncommon thing for the war department to incline a kindly ear to the solicitations of senators and congressmen in behalf of someone in the service. Some gross mispromotions have resulted—as the army records bear witness.

Secretary Garrison has denounced this "You tickle me and I will tickle you" policy. It should have been exposed long ago, not only for the "good of the service," but for the good of politics in its truer sense and the good of government. One can scarcely imagine a more corrupting influence in the army than the exercise of a political pull. And yet this is what has been practiced in not a few instances in the past. Political pull in the army invites inefficiency, and often when such pull exists the larger the army the more marked the inefficiency.

Indeed, the political interference with assignments and promotions discounts merit and makes demoralization inevitable. Our standing army is

said to be pitifully small, in comparison with other countries. But it is not so much size, as it is soundness and discipline that count.

PROSPERITY FOR ONE IS PROSPERITY FOR ALL.

If you are a farmer the value of your farm depends on the value of the adjoining farm, and the value of both depends on the value of property in the nearest village or town, says Holland, a man who knows what he talks about. Farms near prosperous towns are always more valuable than those near dead or dying settlements. And this is true without regard to the fertility of the soil.

The farmer depends on the town just as the town depends for prosperity on the farmer. Their destinies are interlinked; their interests are common. What hurts one hurts the other. Poor crops will affect the city resident who does not even raise radishes, and depressed business affairs affect the farmer who depends on soil, weather and muscle for his living.

Money sent to mail order houses helps to turn thriving towns into dead hamlets. It decreases the population of the towns that most directly use the products of the farm. It lowers the price for butter and eggs, for chickens and for fruits and vegetables.

So, Mr. Farmer, if you deal with a mail order house in a distant city you are taking a course that takes from the value of your farm, that renders it less desirable as a place of residence and less productive of profit. You can't follow a system that injures your neighbors without being compelled to shoulder some of the expense yourself. Take the safer course and spend your money where you make it.

WOMEN POLICE OFFICERS.

Mayor Harrison's ordinance for the appointment of ten women as police officers has been recommended for passage by the committee on schools of the Chicago council, an act which is said to assure its being carried. According to the plans, the new officers will be assigned to bathing beaches and public playgrounds.

Several cities are experimenting with women officers, especially in the handling of young women who frequent the streets at night. In many respects a woman is better qualified to do work of this kind than a man is. For one thing, she often can gain the confidence of those she is called upon to correct and if she is the right kind of a woman can do a constructive work in character building. Many of the girls picked up on the street only need straight, honest advice from someone they trust to mend their ways. A policeman can not always give this advice in the way that it should be given. In the first place, the bar of sex is always present between a male officer and a female prisoner and, in the second, the policeman's general experience often makes him rough and callous. His contact with former cases of this nature leads him to look with suspicion and possibly a measure of contempt on any methods but the severely direct

and harsh ones he is accustomed to using.

The woman officer, if chosen for her duties after a careful consideration of her personality and her training for the work, should bring to it a freshness of viewpoint and a sympathy that would help mightily in keeping her from getting into a rut. With children and young people generally she should be able to exert an influence that would save many of them, at least from persisting in the first false steps. Cities, recognizing that the time has come when the problem of vice must be attacked from a new angle, show an appreciation of their responsibilities by their readiness to try an innovation which, wisely handled, should help toward a solution.

THE CASE OF HOLZHAY.

So many released convicts are being described nowadays as having become highly educated in prison that the common man who has not had much time for study is tempted to believe that the path to self improvement lies through the prison door.

"Black Bart" Holzhay, highwayman and murderer, is the latest talented prisoner to step into free life. Holzhay for a long time was an ugly captive to handle. Today his hand is crippled by a shot that a guard directed at him in a life and death struggle. An operation, however, was performed and the doctors say that relieving pressure on a nerve center made a new man of him. At any rate, he really is not the same chap who held up stage coaches and killed a Chicago banker who resisted him twenty-four years ago. Constant reading has made him far better informed than most men of abundant leisure. Of late years he has been librarian and photographer at Marquette, Michigan, prison and in the former position availed himself of all the opportunities for self education furnished him.

If "Black Bart" had remained free he probably wouldn't have known a book from a porous plaster today. Nobody would have thought of paying his expenses at a hospital and the fee a surgeon would have charged for operating on him. Instead of having time to study, all his leisure would have been taken up with earning three meals a day if he had turned honest, or with dodging the police if he had remained a crook.

THE LOAFER.

Says Uncle Walt Mason, with his usual jingle:

Here the summer loafer stands; in his pockets are his hands; and the boss of all the grangers comes and cries: "I am needing toilers now, after, to reap and men to plow, and I'll feed them full of porterhouse and pies. Ample wages will I pay, by the month or by the day, if you'll only wield a pitchfork or a spade, and you'll draw your pay in cash, and you'll have the best of hash, and a schooner every hour of lemonade." Says the idle corner shirk: "I would surely like to work, but my dying granny made me take a vow, that I'd never, never toil with the nerve destroying soil, that I'd never risk my life behind a plow. For her uncle's brother Jules walked behind a pair of mules plowing up a fertile meadow by the sea; and the mules reached out behind with their heels and knocked him blind, and my granny feared a kindred fate for me." Said the granger: "Oh, the deuce! you have always an excuse, you big loafers who are rotting in the sun! And the honest men who work must support the moldy shirk when the summer with its harvesting is done. Which is why I often think that the country's on the blink; if our government were worth a pint of pitch every loafer foul and stale would be breaking rock in jail, while the sheriff flected his midriff with a switch!"

They have a man under arrest at Lansing, Mich., who has four wives. The last one he is said to have stolen, therefore he must be a kleptomaniac for thieves of this sort take things for which they have no use.

A seat on the New York stock exchange sold recently for \$37,000. If those seats got much cheaper, Uncle Sam might buy a few for his standing army.

When you see father with an expression on his face like a drum major leading a village band, you may generally conclude that the family addition is a boy.

Sacrifice Prices on Dependable Merchandise

That's the secret of the unparalleled success of this great Remodeling Sale. Many have made their purchases for months to come and saved many dollars by taking advantage of our great reductions.

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Only a short time now until the store will be completed, new fall stocks arrive, and this great sale will end.

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West's Remodeling Sale

NOTICE TO WATER USERS.

Notice is hereby given that water

rents will be collected up to and including Monday, 11th, and all water Adv. rents that are not paid, will be shut off Tuesday, 12th.

L. M. HOYT,
Water Supt.

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Tonic Digestive

is the greatest strength renewer, flesh creator and blood builder we have ever seen. For people in poor health, weak, run down and played out, those not as strong and vigorous as they should be,

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It has grown steadily until it has become one of the strongest and most prosperous financial institutions in the West.

The soundness of policies is attested by the long list of conservative business men who transact their business here; also by an earned surplus of \$395,000, the work of time and the result of conservative management.

This bank has facilities for taking care of more high grade business and offers its services to those who appreciate the best in banking.

La Grande National Bank
La Grande, Oregon

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

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WHO THOROUGHLY UNDERSTAND THE BUSINESS. EVERY GARMENT THAT LEAVES OUR SHOP IS ABSOLUTELY CLEAN AND SPOTLESS. SATISFACTION GUARANTEED. PRICES REASONABLE. COME IN AND SEE US.

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