

THE OBSERVER

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STATE ACCOUNTING.

The intent of the law passed two years ago providing for uniform accounting in all counties and for inspection and examination of all county records by the state officials was very good, but those who passed the law forgot to reckon with human jealousy and county units.

Several counties have been inspected and the county courts of a number have refused to pay the special agents for their work. This is due to the fact that the special agents found things run poorly and plainly so stated in their reports. In Baker county, for instance the county court (the court prior to the Messick court) rose high on its dignity and told the special agents to go elsewhere for their pay. Other counties did the same thing and as a result cases have been filed in the different courts to collect the fees.

Quite naturally those examining the books of the officers who are to pay them will make the examination as light as possible, and leave the county with a good feeling on all sides. But that was the very thing the law endeavored to prevent. The law contemplates examination by disinterested parties, much the same as the federal government examines its postoffices by examiners who are not friendly or even acquainted with postmasters.

It seems the whole scheme is a failure and through its failure came the downfall of Insurance Commissioner Ferguson. He was the head of the state accounting department and when once the different counties got an opportunity to prod him they went vigorously at it. There was no doubt other things wrong with Ferguson else he would not have been removed, but it is safe to guess that his first troubles arose from the mess stirred up in different counties by the official examination of the county records by his state department. If we have state account it must be entirely revised and a different system adopted.

SCHOOL CHILDREN TO RAISE HOGS.

A conference of far-reaching importance to the livestock industry of the Pacific northwest was held at the Portland Union stockyards a few days ago. As a result of this conference, arrangements have been made whereby it will be possible to send out 1,000 or more brood sows to the boys and girls of Oregon, these animals being treated for, and guaranteed against cholera. The sows are not to be given away, but are to be sold at prices ranging from \$18 to \$25 each, and in payment the stockyards people will accept a note running from 8 to 10 months at 6 percent interest, the note to be indorsed

by the father or guardian of the boy or girl and approved by the county school superintendent.

The family of infant porkers will appear in four or five weeks after shipment of the sow, and the boy or girl will have plenty of time before their note matures to bring the pigs to a marketable age and dispose of them to the best advantage, paying off the note with the proceeds of the sale. In the work done by the hog clubs of the Northwest last year, an eleven year old girl at Washougal, Wash., made a clear profit of \$79 on one brood sow. In this instance two litters, 24 pigs in all, were produced. Local educators have expressed the opinion that this is the most important step ever taken in this line of work and, as far as known, the first movement of the kind ever started in the United States.

IT IS NOW UNANIMOUS.

While disagreeing with Governor Withycombe during the late campaign on the direct primary law and the tremendous expense incurred by some features of that law, the Portland Journal evidently was in a position at that time where it had to fight Withycombe on something and that issue seemed to be the handiest.

But, let by-gones be by-gones. Withycomb was elected and no one is now harboring any hatred for the Journal because of its strenuous endeavor to land its own man in the governor's chair. The point of interest now is the stand the Journal is taking in regard to direct legislation. Agreeing with the taxpayers that there is an utterly useless expense involved that paper in Sunday's issue printed a very sensible and timely editorial.

The Journal said: "There can scarcely be objection to Senator Day's proposal to require that only registered voters be eligible to sign initiative and referendum petitions.

"Changes in the direct legislation system should be made only with extreme care. Nothing should be done to impair the efficiency of what has proven itself to be a priceless implement for giving the people supreme and direct power in governing themselves.

"But it is a fact that the state has been bedeviled with fraudulent petitions. In the late recall petitions in Portland there were forgeries; there were bogus names and there were signatures of people at addresses where there was no building for a place of residence.

"Worse frauds appeared in the petitions for referending the workmen's compensation law in 1913. One half the signatures were obtained between Jefferson and Couch and Front and Fifth streets in Portland. More than 800 names appeared twice. Approximately 300 gave addresses which were not addresses. Nearly 100 gave addresses at a First street hotel which kept no register, and most if not all the signers were believed to have been transients. A similar number of signers located themselves at a North End lodging house, and not one was living there when the place was subsequently investigated.

"In the referendum of the State University petitions several years ago there were glaring instances of vicious frauds. Telephone directories were resorted to, and names boldly forged. Hundreds of names thus written on the petitions were finally exposed after great effort and costly and tedious investigation.

"A provision permitting only registered voters to sign petitions and providing a strong penalty for violations with a penitentiary term for

circulators who resort to frauds would be a wholesome reform that would both strengthen the initiative and referendum and put an end to one atrocious abuse of the system."

Sure, turn out and help the Commercial club kick up its heels this evening. It has been a long time since there was anything going with the old club. Lets reorganize and breathe new life in the game once more.

THE MASTER KEY.

(Continued from Page 3.)

"You must be very tired, my dear," Mrs. Darnell purred. "And, anyway, you know in New York young ladies do not go about unescorted to men's business offices, and I cannot go with you until tomorrow or next day."

"That will be too late," cried Ruth. Mrs. Darnell opened her eyes wide, as if in surprise. "Mr. Everett is coming to dinner tonight," she said soothingly. "You can talk business to your heart's content right here."

"That will be much better," said Ruth. When her hostess was gone she stood by the window trying to think more calmly of all that had happened since she had left "The Master Key" mine, but one thought was prominent: "What was John Dorr doing?" She recalled that there was three hours difference in time. It was now 2 o'clock in New York, and it was only 11 in the St. Valley. Tom Kane would be just making his final preparations for dinner, and she could almost smell the odor of his coffee. These homely details occupied her mind tenderly for an hour; then she caught up and dressed herself for the street again.

She had barely finished when the maid came in with tea, followed by Mrs. Darnell.

"My child, what in the world are you going to do?" asked Jenn. "Look, we'll have tea together."

"I was going out for a walk," Ruth responded. "You know I have never



"What was John Dorr doing?"

been in New York, and it seems a shame to waste this fine afternoon. Anyway, I want some fresh air."

Mrs. Darnell looked at her thoughtfully and smiled presently in a way that made Ruth flush. It seemed to convict her of discourtesy to her hostess. "You had best have tea!" and the girl obediently removed her hat and jacket and sat down.

It seemed to her that the rest of the afternoon passed in flashes of such entertainment as she had never known. It must be remembered that Ruth, living in the mine nearly all her life since leaving school, had not had the advantages of the society of trained, alert, smart, clever women. Mrs. Darnell was very clever and she used her every art to keep Ruth's attention. She succeeded.

That night at dinner George Drake, posing as George Everett, suddenly dashed darkly and turned to the girl at his left. "Miss Galton," he said in a whisper, flashing his dark eyes toward his hostess to see if she were watching. "I really hope that the first you put in me you won't find misplaced. I'll do everything I can to help you, even if it is funny that I don't know that John Dorr has red hair."

Ruth looked at him very soberly. "I don't just understand a great many things," she said. "It all seems so strange. Mr. Everett and you know I am worried. I ought to go to the Ritz Carlton and see if there are telegrams for me. So that's what I would wish me. I'm afraid Mrs. Darnell thinks I'm awfully impolite because I want to go and make sure for myself that John has not wired."

Our Greatest Satisfaction is the Often Repeated Remark: "When The West Store Advertises a Sale You can Depend on It"

17th Great Annual January Clearance Sale

Every Article in the Store Reduced

Everything At Big Savings in the Dry Goods Dept.

January is the month in which shrewd housewives supply their households and sewing needs at this annual Clearance at this store with the greatest possible savings. Here you will find the greatest varieties, biggest stocks and everything is new and seasonable. Case after case of new Spring Embroideries, White Goods, Etc., are just received and placed on sale at Clearance prices.

Big Clearance Immense Stock Wash Goods

- One lot Wash Goods, 25c and 35c values 17c
25c Gingham, Clearance 20c
15c Gingham, Clearance 12 1-2c
12 1-2c Gingham, Clearance 11c
8 1-3c Apron Gingham, Clearance 6c
Thousands of yards of Outing Flannels in White, Cream, Checks, Stripes, at price per yard 4c to 12c

Beautify the Home now Most Economically

- All Lace Curtains, now 20 per cent off.
Choice Tapestries reduced 20 per cent.
\$1.00 quality Iridescent Draperies, 85c
75c quality Iridescent Draperies 65c
50c quality Iridescent Draperies 43c
35c quality Cretons Reduced now to 30c
25c quality Cretons, reduced now to 20c
15c quality Cretons reduced now to 11c
10c quality Cretons reduced now to 8c
50c quality Scrims reduced to 42c
45c quality Scrims reduced now to 38c
35c quality Scrims, reduced now to 28c
25c quality Scrims reduced now to 21c
300 yds Scrim, extra value, special 16c
500 yds Scrim, extra value, special 13c

Woolen Goods, Beautiful Silks, Big Reductions

- One lot Dress Goods - Ratines, Crepes, etc., values to 50c, now 19c
One lot Dress Goods, Fancy Mixtures, values to 75c, Clearance 29c
One lot Dress Goods, Voiles, Silk, Porcupines, Ratines, etc., values to \$1.25, special 49c
36-inch Poplin, Clearance 73c
40-inch Silk and Wool Poplin \$1.09
24-inch Cheney Foulard Silks 65c
36-inch Fancy Silks, \$2.00 quality, \$1.25
First quality Tub Silks 83c
75c quality Tub Silks 59c

Linens, Towels, Sheetings, Pillow Cases Spreads, White Goods, At Clearance Prices

Piles and piles of them everywhere and at genuine reductions to you. Hundreds of La Grande women always depend on this store to buy Linens, Sheetings, Etc., because first they can always depend on the quality and, second, because they can always find what is wanted from our large stocks.

Any Woman's Suit in the Store, now - - \$7.98
Any Woman's Coat in the Store, now - - \$6.98
Think of it, values to \$35.00, New This Season

One lot Men's Overcoats "Kenreign" Make \$4.98
values to \$17.50 Good Styles, now - -

All Men's Balmacaans Overcoats now at Clearance 1/3 off

NK West & Co. THE QUALITY STORE

The first week of the legislature session what will the "antis" have to say about? Read the advertisements.

Just Arrived 1915 MAXWELL "25" COME AND SEE IT LEIGHTON'S GARAGE

(To be Continued)

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Capital \$200,000.00 Resources \$1,000,000.00 Surplus \$50,000.00

OFFICERS:-

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What This Bank Aims to Do

- To promote our customers' interests as we would our own;
To do all we can to make their relations here profitable and agreeable to them;
To contribute to their enterprises, the co-operation, foresight and timely assistance which a good Bank can properly bestow.