

THE OBSERVER

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GOVERNMENTAL EXTRA VAGANCE

Touching upon a subject that many of us have often wished could be brought up in a national way the Saturday Evening Post editorially says:

On a mere suspicion, unsupported by tangible evidence, that the railroads were generally over-capitalized Congress ordered a physical valuation that will cost fifty million dollars. That illustrates the readiness at Washington to investigate anything that is charged with a public interest.

That the Federal Government itself is badly organized, inefficient and wasteful is not a mere suspicion but an admitted fact. Presidents have called attention to it. Persons most familiar with the concern have repeatedly affirmed it. Instances have been pointed out. The only real difference of opinion is as to the amount of waste. The Government spends a thousand million dollars a year of public money—roughly, half the country's annual freight bill. If it were a private concern levying a like toll on the public, and under a like charge of waste, it would have been overhauled some time ago.

We have no more faith in an investigation of the huge concern at Washington from within than we should have in an investigation of the railroads or the trusts by themselves. We do believe that a body of capable, independent men, familiar with the organization and methods of the best-run private businesses, could point out ways of coordinating and economizing the work at Washington that would be beneficial to the public, which foots the bills. There should be no partisanship about it and no politics about it. Whatever the exact facts may be, virtually everybody believes that the Government wastes much public money. That is not a profitable thought to be afloat in the public mind. How much and how little truth there is in it ought to be determined; and there is quite certainly enough truth in it to warrant an investigation—not from the inside but from the outside. What representative, nonpolitical body will take it up?

ABOLISHING RECORDER.

Along the lines of economy Representative Woodell from Union county has introduced a bill in the legislature to abolish the office of Recorder of Conveyances in this county.

This is a matter that has long been talked of, and in the opinion of many it can properly be done without upsetting the machinery of the county.

Many counties of Oregon have abolished this office, but in doing so there

is an added duty to the county clerk's office which insofar as business of the county goes, practically transact the larger portion as it now stands.

There may be a saving in amalgamating the clerk's office with the county recorder but there is also added responsibility and a heavier load for the county clerk to carry.

This will make it imperative that a capable man be chosen to the latter office. Union county at the present time is fortunate in having Ed. Wright as county clerk who is thoroughly efficient and capable of handling any and as many other departments of the county as the legislature may see fit to put in his office, but when Ed. Wright decides to quit public life it will then be very important that another capable official be chosen to follow him, for with the added business from the recorder's office the office of county clerk will carry a voluminous lot of work.

DANGER AHEAD.

President Wilson started on a career of peace at any price and with many he won great favor upon this principle. Now comes the Ship Purchasing bill before congress, backed by the President with all the energy he possesses.

The Ship Purchasing bill means that the United States shall purchase from Germany the interned ships in our ports, which by the rules of war, were forced to hunt shelter and dismantled during the present war. The bill means two very important things—first that this country is driving a bargain for ships at the expense of Germany's unfortunate position, and second, that the neutrality of this country is liable, very liable to be questioned to an extent that will bring on trouble if the United States turns over to Germany money for ships that are now idle, thus in an indirect manner making an active fighting agency against the Allies of what is now dead timber to the German empire. How the President can harmonize his first stand for peace at any price with his present stand of driving a bargain during war times for a commercial shipping fleet is not quite easily understood.

WATCH THE DACIA.

A hot headed ship owner has loaded the Dacia with cotton and sailed for Rotterdam in the face of the certainty of being captured and taken into a British prize court. The Dacia is a German vessel recently purchased by an American.

Thus the international question is coming closer and closer to the door of Uncle Sam, and unfortunate as it may seem, it is being brought by our own people. Why should the Dacia's owner take such a chance when the diplomatic circles are overtaxed to keep the United States free from the present entanglement across the water?

Change in the fish and game laws as outlined in the recent bill introduced, will make great confusion in Oregon. Already the sportsmen, almost to a man, have registered their objections and those who are trying to put through the change will come to grief sooner or later to all appearances.

Representative Jones finds that ex-Judge French of Wallowa county has not served a day in prison, although he was convicted and sentenced. Eastern Oregon people would no doubt be shocked in many ways if they only know how things have actually been run at Salem in many ways.

The first two weeks of the legislature were not bad at all. Economy still clings to every crumb of the state house, and the number of bills introduced is happily small compared with other sessions. Stick to it, boys, make good for once.

Canada is now buying horses to ship to the war zone. Guess Union county will furnish her share, for Canada has always come here for all the cavalry horses we could supply in the time of peace.

The Idaho legislature created a new county and the best name they could find for it was "Benewah." The baby had better never been born rather than have to carry such a name.

"All the world knows the Portland Rose" is the prize slogan chosen by the committee in that city, and it is not bad at that.

LOST—A Surrey, somewhere in vicinity of La Grande. Reward for return to Walter M. Pierce, Phone Farmers 8-X. 1 25 ttp.

WAR TAX EXPENSIVE.

Realty Transfer Causes Outlay of \$20.00 for Revenue Stamps.

Twenty dollars in war tax was required on the documents filed in the office of the County Recorder last week in the deal involving the sale of Grande Ronde valley land by Mrs. Eva Andross to Guy J. Glenn. The land in the deal represented a total value of \$20,000 and the law requires that the documents filed with the Recorder shall bear a stamp to the value of one dollar for every thousand dollars represented in the document. This is the largest amount of war tax affixed to any single document in this county to date.

Golf Tournament On at Palm Beach. Palm Beach, Fla., Jan. 25.—Palm Beach's annual golf tourney opened today during the height of the winter tourist season.

Ladd Canyon News Items. Ladd Canyon, Ore., Jan. 23.—(Special)—The weather seems to have turned quite cold again.

The last literary meeting was held Jan. 15, with a good attendance, as usual. The subject debated upon was, Resolved, "Hhat Variety has Caused More Grief and Harm to the Human Race than Jealousy Has." The judges, who were Sylvous Moon, Leon Flowers and Charles Grandy, deciding in favor of the negative. Even though the young ladies of the neighborhood handled the question, it has been declared by many to be the best debate which has been given this winter, as they brought up many astonishing and interesting points and each defending their side well. The program was well rendered. The paper, known as the Ladd Canyon Sledge Hammer, was written and read by Mrs. D. W. Miller in a pleasing manner. The extemporaneous talk was given by John Tucker. "Evolution and Revolution" being his subject, which he handled with ease. The next meeting will be held Friday night, Jan. 29, but on account of the length of a negro play, entitled "Love and Lather" no debate will be given. It is a comical barber shop scene, in one act. James Muhlolland, S. Moon, Guy Miller, Curtiss Lindsay and Charles Grandy will be the characters, the two last mentioned representing negro wenches. John Larm will edit the next Sledge Hammer.

Mr. and Mrs. Neill McClure have returned home from Baker where they spent a week with Mrs. McClure's relatives.

Mr. and Mrs. Redge Heryford arrived home recently from Enterprise where they visited a couple of weeks with Mrs. Heryford's sister, Mrs. Charlia Dougherty.

E. T. Peebler returned home recently from a business trip to Pocatello.

Wallowa Sun Boosting. "Buy it in Wallowa," is a motto that every resident and property holder in Wallowa and vicinity can put to practice with benefit to himself and all his neighbors. It need not apply to merchandise only. Its principal is broad and far reaching enough to apply to raw material, labor, produce, supplies, merchandise and all commodities that can possibly be secured at home. The benefits of such a policy can never definitely be known until it is put into practice, but those communities which are putting this motto into practice are enjoying prosperity and are putting it into practice more and more. Such a policy goes hand in hand with prosperity. There is always enough money in any community to make times good if it is kept in circulation. The community that buys at home is saving its money for the close times.—Wallowa Sun.

17th Annual January Clearance Sale Last Week! Just 6 More Days

Your last chance to share in the splendid economies now in force all over the store. Just one more week of the January Clearance—Don't delay longer. Every article in the store now reduced. Everything sacrificed!

Deeper Reductions on Blankets & Comforts

With this touch of cold weather, with the thermometer around zero at night there are many homes that will need warmer bed coverings to be really comfortable and if you are looking for the best blankets and comforts at the lowest prices this is the place to do your buying. All kinds, all sizes and all grades of blankets and comforts and NOW AT DEEPER REDUCTION THAN EVER TO MAKE A FINAL JANUARY CLEARANCE. See window

FINE WOOL BLANKETS \$1.81 \$2.00 \$2.50 \$3.83 \$5.80 \$6.80 \$8.50 Full size—Woolnaps—Plain colors—Fancy Plaid Wool Blankets

FINEST COMFORTS \$1.00 \$2.25 \$2.63 \$3.00 \$3.38 Finest Silkoline covered, finest corded filling

WARM COMFORTS 95¢ \$1.25 \$1.31 \$1.50 \$1.80 Sateen covered, heavy and medium weight

COTTON FLEECE BLANKETS 68¢ 80¢ 98¢ \$1.20 \$1.40 \$1.60 White cotton blankets—Fancy stripe borders—Heavy fleeced.

An Exceptional Opportunity NOVELTY WHITE DRESSES Sold Formerly at \$6.50, \$10.00, \$15.00 Of Voile - Cotton Crepe - Lingerie - Ratine's white only \$2.48

Household Needs, Dry Goods, Clearance Prices

This will be your week to supply your household and sewing needs at Clearance Prices. See to it that you profit to the fullest extent. All lines of domestics, curtains, draperies, wash goods, white goods, flannels, towels, linens, etc. are now selling at the lowest possible price of the year.

Now at One Half Price Separate Dress Skirts Not one skirt reserved—blacks, blues and fancy mixtures in over-tunics and plain styles. Regular \$4.00 \$5.00 \$6.50 \$7.50 \$9.00 \$12.00 skirts now \$2.00 \$2.50 \$3.25 \$3.75 \$4.50 \$6.00

Now at One Half Price Entire Line Ladies' Dresses Our high grade stock of afternoon street and evening dresses—Everyone new this season—Silks, crepes, serges, garbardnies and challies. Regular \$8.00 \$10.00 \$12.50 \$15.00 \$20.00 \$25.00 dresses now \$4.00 \$5.00 \$6.25 \$7.50 10.00 and 12.50

Every Article Reduced N.W. West & Co. THE QUALITY STORE Free Delivery 3 Phone Lines

Work on Buildings at Fair Completed. San Francisco, Jan. 25.—Work on the Panama-Pacific Exposition's exhibit buildings is now completed. The last building to be finished was the steel-framed fireproof Palace of Fine Arts. This building in the form of an arc, 1100 feet in length, is situated on a large lagoon immediately west of the main group of palaces, and it is regarded as the handsomest building on the grounds. It cost about \$500,000.

PLANING MILL ROBBED. Belts Cut and Much Harm Done Avers Owner H. A. Ackert.

To have four feet cut from a perfectly good belt, and have other belting cut and slashed, was the experience Saturday night of H. A. Ackert, who operates the Ackert planing mill in La Grande. This is not the first time the mill has been burglarized and leather stolen. Over \$40 worth of heavy belting has thus been taken, and the delay resulting brings the loss considerably higher. Mr. Ackert says he will gladly give anyone leather enough to half sole their shoes if they will call at his office but he doesn't want his belts cut.

Demurrs to Strange Case. Baker, Jan. 25.—Attorney Joseph J. Heilner, counsel for Wm. L. Smith in the suit for divorce brought by his wife, Mary E. Smith, yesterday filed a demurrer to the complaint, alleging the complaint in the action does not set forth facts sufficient to constitute cause of action. This is the case in which, when he served a copy of the complain on the husband, Deputy Sheriff Nelson found the whole family, husband, wife and children, all eating dinner together at their home in



Davis Campbell, Richard & Pringle's star end man, who is to be in La Grande soon.

LA GRANDE NATIONAL BANK Capital \$200,000.00 Resources \$1,000,000.00 Surplus \$50,000.00 OFFICERS: Fred J. Holmes, President C. C. Penington, V.-Prest. F. L. Meyers, Cashier Earl Zundel and H. E. Coolidge, Ass't Cashiers DIRECTORS: Fred J. Holmes A. T. Hill H. E. Coolidge C. C. Penington J. F. Conley A. Blockland F. L. Meyers J. G. Snodgrass H. S. Brownton 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.