

THE OBSERVER

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WHAT OTHERS SAY.

The Hunter Who Fires Before He Looks. (San Francisco Bulletin.)

The State Fish and Game commission advises deer hunters "never to crawl or creep; to wear a conspicuous coat, hat, or handband; to be sure what they see and know what they aim at." This advice may reduce the number of shooting accidents this season, but it will not eliminate them. Somewhere in California there is at least one deer hunter, apparently intelligent, and not thirsty for human blood, who will go into the woods, hear a rustle in the underbrush, fire and cripple, at the best, a cow and at the worst, a human being. After he has done it he will be sorry. He will simply have been foolish, not bad, but his victim will be just as badly shot up as though he had been injured in a British trench by a German rifleman. It is evident from this that when we reform this imperfect world into a perfect world we will not only have to make all the bad people good, but all the foolish people wise.

Marine Insurance. (New York Times.) If, as claimed, the venture of our government into the business of marine insurance has netted it a profit of \$1,000,000 for each of the two years that have elapsed since the plan was started, one might conclude that the charges exacted from ship owners and shippers have been too high, especially as it is not a usual, perhaps not a legitimate, governmental ambition to increase revenues in this particular way. Doubt about the reality of the profit made is due only to the general querness of government bookkeeping, and its familiar tendency to ignore expense and count gross earnings as net.

Still the conclusion that the charges were unduly, that is, unnecessarily, high might be hasty. That is strongly suggested by the fact that the regular marine insurance companies, with their greater experience in computing risks, would not take the war business except at rates much larger than the government chose to charge. It may be, therefore, that the government was more lucky than wise, and that its \$2,000,000 is not a sufficient compensation, from the actual point of view, for the great losses it undertook to meet.

A Meritorious Measure. (Ontario Democrat.) With the increasing wave of experiments in initiative legislation in recent years, the tendency has grown to knife nearly every such measure at the polls. We hope an exception will be made this fall in the case of the

proposed establishment of a state normal school of Eastern Oregon at Pendleton. Whatever else we need and hope for, Oregon must have good schools. Their prerequisite is capable teachers. Proper training is obtained only in well equipped normal schools. Previous efforts to establish such schools did not meet with great success, but the location was unfortunate. Pendleton offers the facilities, in site, surroundings and schools, such an institution needs. And now that the county superintendents of the state, who know its educational needs, and the heads of three big state educational institutions, have endorsed and urged the Pendleton proposal, the voters in whose hands the welfare of the schools rests should remember their duty in November and vote for the establishment of this much needed adjunct.

Col. Roosevelt at War. (New York Telegram.) Slothfulness of civic service, highest cost and least efficiency are not peculiar to great communities.

Colonel Roosevelt, who is just now engaged in his usual vigorous way in a cleaning up crusade in Oyster Bay says owners of dirty property who "jeopardize the health of every child and adult in the village," should be punished to the limit, and that some conditions there are as bad as the overcrowding in the worst tenement house districts in New York city.

Wish the colonel would come on here and help us clean up.

Mr. Roosevelt thinks there is a connection between dirt and infantile paralysis, which our experts apparently do not believe.

And sneaking of dirt and disease, what hiding places for filth those sub-way grating ventilators in the sidewalk in Broadway will be!

THE FORUM

Mr. Emigh Cogitates La Grande, Aug. 31.—(To the Editor)—I was arrested a few days ago under the charge of interfering with the fire department and I am writing this article for publication hoping that the efforts made by the city authorities may not be entirely wasted and that the 'morbid maniacs' who rush out to every fire, big and little, may learn a lesson from my experience.

In the time of fires, above all other times, people should keep cool and in their proper places, but it is then when a certain class of our citizens loose their heads and fly around 'like a cricket in a hot skillet.' One night last winter I was at a fire that broke out quite near my own home and I saw a perfect example of these freaks. It was a big, fat woman of middle age, she had run several blocks to see the fun and to give the fire boys the benefit of her council. She was bare headed and did not have clothes enough on her body to "flag a hand car." At another time I saw a motherly old body pushing a baby buggy and tearing down the "pike" after the hose cart as though she was the fire chief and that the salvation of the whole town depended on her getting there in time. Auto fiends, old men and little kids nearly break their necks and other people's necks trying to see how foolish they can act and how many city rules they can violate.

I do not blame the fire boys for the part they took in my conviction, but I do blame the gang mentioned above for making it necessary that someone should be made an example of. I have had some experience as an officer in small towns and I know full well how little they are paid for their valuable service and how little it is appreciated by the public, the people will infringe little by little on the laws and step over the line little by little until they must be brought up with a "round turn" and I believe that our fire boys had about gone the limit in forbearance.

We do not feel able to bear too much of the expense of educating the people along these lines, but if the medicine prescribed has the desired affect we will try and swallow the dose with a smile and though it is hard to be obliged to do the "goat" stunt, we trust that the treatment will make us immune from another attack in the future.

Personally I do not think that the facts in the case as brought out by the evidence justified the verdict, but I do not censure the judge, as I believe that he was perfectly honest in his conclusions and I take this opportunity to thank him for his leniency and fairness.

If the party who chose me for the "example" can get any satisfaction out of my conviction he is welcome to it, as it was quite a little satisfaction to me to see that the prosecution had so little faith in his evidence that they failed to call him as a witness.

In summing up the whole case, I would offer as a scientific diagnosis, "green aphid" of which our city is sorely afflicted.

JARVIS EMIGH.

To Investigate Prison Salem, Or., Aug. 30.—The state board of Control today passed a resolution calling for a thorough investigation of the state prison.

The resolution which was introduced by State Treasurer Kay as an amendment to one introduced last week by Governor Withycombe, was supported by Secretary of State Olcott and opposed by Governor Withycombe. The governor objected to it because it provided for the appointment of the commission by the board of control. The executive's resolution of last week had provided for the appointment of the commission by himself. Incidentally, the governor rapped the new rule permitting convicts to smoke cigarettes and Kay defended it.

Resolution As Adopted The following is the resolution adopted:

"Whereas, it is a well recognized fact that the buildings of our penitentiary are old and, in present condition, will not permit the institution of a modern system of penological work, and,

"Whereas, it is advisable to have some well prepared and up-to-date plan for real constructive work, and the change necessary to place the same into practical operation at the Oregon State penitentiary, therefore be it

"Resolved, that a non-salaried commission be appointed by the state board of control composed of three citizens of the state to make a thorough survey of the said penitentiary and report its findings and recommendations to the said board.

"Resolved that for the purpose of securing proper data said commission be given access to all prison records and papers, and be authorized and allowed any officer, employe or inmate of the institution.

"The problems upon which information and recommendations are especially desired are:

- Special Problems Up "1—Efficiency of administration along lines of modern penology. "2—The supervision of religious and educational work. "3—The parole board, parole officer, their powers, duties and responsibilities. "4—Changes advisable in present buildings. "5—Desirability of a new unit for segregation of first offenders and establishment of industrial work and industrial education for them. "6—The advisability of establishing the prison farther out into the country upon a larger tract of land, operated by prison labor, so as to make the institution as near self sustaining as possible.

Resolved, That any expenses incurred by said commission, while in performance of these duties, when approved by board, shall be paid from funds of Oregon state penitentiary."

Governor Has Objections

When Kay moved the adoption of his amendment to the governor's resolution, the governor declared that he did not believe it was a good thing to have the commission named by a divided board. He asserted that he had no desire to interfere with the present administration of the prison and that his sole object in introducing his resolution was to place the prison on modern and humanitarian lines. He suggested that if the board named the commission one man would have Olcott's ideas, another Kay's and the third his own. While the prison is under the supervision of the Board of Control, the governor, as executive, was held responsible by the people, Withycombe continued. The governor, he said, was the only one having power to grant paroles and pardons.

Both Kay and Olcott asserted that it was not their idea that each member should choose a member of the commission, but that the board should agree on its membership.

Kay said that if the governor wanted to appoint a commission himself he could do so and have it report to him but he did not favor having the governor name a commission which would report to the board of control. He was not in favor of having three factions represented on the commission.

"That will be the logical result if the board names it," said the governor.

Question Is Discussed

Olcott said that Kay and he had discussed the matter and had arrived at the conclusion that the board should name the commission.

The vote was then taken Kay and Olcott favoring the amended resolution and Withycombe opposing it.

"I want to go on record as saying that a great mistake has been made in restoring the cigarette habit in the prison, after nine years," said Gov-

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ernor Withycombe following the vote on the resolution.

Kay said that in investigating the prison last week it was found that prisoners were chained up from six to twelve hours for smoking cigarettes. Although there was a rule against it, they continued to smoke. Inasmuch as about 50 per cent of the people outside the prison smoke cigarettes and the convicts continued to break the rule, Kay said he had suggested the changing of the rule so as to permit smoking cigarettes.

Withycombe insisted that it created an environment bad for the prisoners. Incidentally, the governor said conditions were bad at the prison, with regard to sanitation and in other ways.

Olcott said that there had been press articles concerning the unsanitary condition of the prison for years. He considered the arrangement of two in a cell bad, and hoped that it could be corrected.

Withycombe said he would like to see the broadest men in the state on the commission. When Kay asked if he was ready to name the commission, the governor said he would rather wait until some future date and no action was taken on the appointment.

At the Foley Hotel

J. L. Merrick, Seattle; L. H. Henninger, G. H. Harvey and family,

Boise; E. L. Hopple, Walla Walla; G. E. Stanfield, W. W. Carroll, F. Gillespie, Portland; Eddit Smith, Elgin; W. Fowler and wife, Vincent; Chas. W. McCarthy, wife and family, Boise; F. M. Ramadall, Portland; A. J. Mulligan, San Francisco; Mrs. A. B. Cox, Chicago; A. A. McDonald, Spokane; Geo. F. Foyle, Denver; H. Smith, Proctor, Seattle; Mr. P. A. Wellstein, New York; M. Griffin, San Francisco; E. Bryson Slater, Wilbur Brock, Lents; A. M. Conrad, Alicel; P. M. Williams, La Grande; Lucile Smith, W. Wentworth, G. Ferguson, E. Pointer, Pendleton; W. Luckel, Joseph; Mrs. A. M. Conrad, Alicel.

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Abundance of Snow

There is an abundance of snow in the Crater creek water shed. The depth of snow is four feet on the level and in some places there are drifts 20 feet deep, it is said.

ROYALTIES AN INCOME

Gas Company Officials Point to Additional Source for Income

Considerable discussion one way and another was indulged in last evening when the gas franchise ordinance was before the city commission. Officials and stockholders in the company were present and one of the things brought out emphatically was that there is a greater income in sight than that which will accrue from the sale of gas. The La Grande Gas company has the Eastern Oregon territory to sell its process to. Because saw-mill and other refuse fills the bill as well as the more costly methods now used by companies not possessing the process to be used here, the La Grande company will be able to sell this process to existing gas plants, and the royalties therefore will accrue to the company here. It was pointed out at the meeting that because this process can make gas so much cheaper than other companies can, that there will be liberal demand for it from eastern Oregon gas companies, and, of course, royalties for the process go to this firm. The managers also pointed out that the company will make gas so cheaply that it can supply it for heating purposes at a rate cheaper than coal or wood.