

EDITORIAL PAGE

A SUPREME COURT

Oregon is face to face with the question of whether or not the Supreme Court is keeping up the high standard of years ago. Other states are doubtless facing the same thing, for the roar and tumult has caused many able men to place their ears to the grass roots that they may hear the popular sentiment rather than stand first as the "Rock of Gibraltar" in all affairs of state.

The public wanted patiently to know whether the death of Governor Withycombe elevated the secretary of state to the governorship and whether the secretary of state could be governor and secretary at one and the same time, and for a decision of the question of whether a new secretary of state should be appointed.

All of these things were patiently discussed at the bedside, in the logging camp, on the farm and in railroad shops. Finally, after the usual preliminaries Oregon's supreme court issued a bunch of personal opinions in number about as great as there are judges on the bench.

Taught as we are, never to question the work of the bench, a patient people resigned themselves to await time's decision, but at the same time many a good man and many a good woman began to deeply consider what kind of a court Oregon has.

It is not that anyone wants to cut Mr. Olett's tenure of office short; neither is it because people have felt whom they wish to elevate to the state house, but it is a desire to have a settled condition which the state is entitled to have.

Men who are placed on the supreme bench frequently become more or less useless. Their work takes them from activity, or at least that has been the mistaken notion that has been followed for years, and they therefore cease to cultivate the real stuff that is in them. Retired becomes stale and the gaining process is carried out. Any young man who goes on the supreme bench, as courts are run today, is barricading himself from the world and is inviting inaction that will incapacitate him for the affairs of men.

The failure of Oregon's court to go to the heart of things and establish a definite course in the governorship is so disappointing to the general public that little will be looked for from that tribunal in the future when gray questions arise.

In a number of states, when fever heat overtook the people causing them to pass peculiar and unnatural laws, the supreme court was the linchpin that saved the state. But if it took courage and conviction and the path of least resistance was a path that such court members shunned rather than followed.

THE ISLAND CITY HIGHWAY.

There is no longer need of scientific advice to assure the public that uses the Island City highway of the poor construction that is apparent. No hard surface pavement should have ocean waves in it that would rock like a windjammer in a storm. The State Highway Commission has no intention of permitting a piece of road to pass inspectors that is not right and the sooner the contractors tear off the surface of the Island City road in many places and make it right, the sooner will harmony prevail and a satisfied people will endorse the piece of construction.

The Warren Construction company cannot get by in Union county with this kind of road work. There is another contract it is now starting upon and a protest should be made by everyone interested at once unless the Island City job be made good.

This means everything to Union county, for just now a bonding issue is before the people who want good roads. The people who are going to pay for the roads only know one thing about road work, and that is they want value received for their money.

The sooner the highway is made good, the sooner will things go smoothly. Failure to make that road good will cause a lot of trouble for all concerned.

WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE

Now that the daylight saving—a strictly wartime measure—is about over, it is interesting to know that electric companies believed sincerely that the measure was a hindrance in that of a benefit to their business. Most of the newspapers of the country, especially mentioned the law as a boon to lighting companies; but a prominent electrical journal has the following to say about the matter:

Daylight saving, after October, will be a thing of the past. Although the act repealing the original measure was twice vetoed by the President, the situation, especially from farmers and the western states, has been strong enough to induce congress to pass the presidential veto. These advantages, which partly have been obtained because of more daylight hours for pleasure, may still be obtained in some cities through local legislation, and propaganda to that end is now at work. Hence lighting companies in large cities may not benefit from the national enactment. It is, therefore, however, how the original purpose of daylight saving has been defeated in the public mind with the enactment of a total repeal of daylight saving. The purpose of the daylight saving act was to effect fuel conservation as a war-time economy. A saving of 5 per cent in fuel consumption was obtained although never proved, and even so, it was obtained in a period of serious fuel shortage, and was a necessary and a real advantage, however great, which should have been maintained, and it is regrettable that they should have been so completely abandoned for other purposes. That this wartime legislation, which has been harmful to lighting companies, has now been repealed, is a source of gratification to the industry.

AN ALIEN WHO BECAME A REAL AMERICAN.

Some years ago a dollar store, friend has emigrated boy stepped ashore at Castle Garden. This month that boy opened a store in the most fashionable shopping district of one of the biggest cities in this country. His story is one which could be used to advantage wherever Americanization work is being conducted. It is also interesting as proving that not all of the aliens who come to America hoard their earnings, try to disrupt our government, and then return to spend their wealth in their own countries.

When this boy came it was with dreams of a golden America. His first job was cutting ice on the Hudson river. But he went to night school and later became a dry goods salesman. His next job was that of a buyer for his firm. Finally he obtained a position as buyer for a Los Angeles house.

When he went west he heard stories of the gold finds in Alaska. Here, at last, he thought to find the Eldorado of every gold for which he had come to this country. He came back from Alaska penniless, and resumed his steady work at the thing he knew best. The store which he has just opened is the testimonial to his success.

Moreover, in establishing his store, the best of this little tale announces that his business is to be conducted on a profit sharing plan, his employees to enjoy with him the results of their joint labors.

Here is the alien, successful through his own efforts, become an American citizen, and keeping American money in circulation in America. Nor does he forget in his success those who would follow his example. Even born Americans may find here something to think about.

GREY AND THE IRISH QUESTION

A member of the British foreign office who will come to Washington with Viscount Grey, the new ambassador, says that the latter will concern himself first of all with the Irish question.

Ireland is recognized as "the gravest question standing in the way of amicable relations between Britain and America." Great Britain wants to settle it as promptly as possible, for the benefit of her international relations, as well as her domestic peace. To this end, it is announced that "Lord Grey's one intention—his first labor in Washington—will be to represent the American people's views on the Irish question."

This is a wise and fortunate policy. It is almost as much to the interest of the United States as of England to have this perplexing problem disposed of. It has played a larger part in American politics than it ought to, and in some ways a very mischievous part.

If a satisfactory settlement can be made, with American co-operation, the distressed island may obtain the freedom it deserves, and then the American people can settle down with calmer minds to the consideration of their own affairs.

NAVY OFFICERS IN NEED OF MORE PAY.

It develops that the personnel of the big fleet sent to the Pacific is short to pieces. There are hardly enough men to handle the vessels on a peace basis, not to mention a war basis, and the recruiting is slow and unsatisfactory.

The fault appears to be simply this—the navy cannot compete with private industry in obtaining men.

Naval officers by the score have given up their commissions, and are seeking to have them accepted, because they cannot live on their pay. Every married officer is obliged to

maintain two establishments, paying his expenses on shipboard as well as the expenses of his family ashore. The salary scale is said to be much too low to allow for this with present prices, and is also much lower than the present earning power in other occupations of men qualified for naval commissions.

It is the same with enlisted men. The navy is having special difficulty in keeping its skilled mechanics. There is nothing surprising about this, when the men's pay is considered. Shipwrights designated as "first class seamen" are paid \$35.50 a month, when they can get several times that much in private shipbuilding plants. Even skilled mechanics in the positions of "first class petty officers" are only paid at the rate of \$66.50 a month for shipfitters, \$61 for electricians, \$61 for blacksmiths, \$55.50 for carpenters, \$52 for painters, etc. They have their own living to be sure; but all of them can find more profitable employment elsewhere, on merchant ships or in the communities they came from.

What is to be done about it? It is another manifestation of the grievous rise in the cost of living. It looks as if the navy payroll will have to be revised upward. That would cost a lot of money, and add its weight to the living expenses of the general public.

COST PROBLEM THAT IS NOT COMPLICATED.

"While live hogs have declined from \$22.00 to \$16.50 per hundredweight since the middle of July," writes a market editor, "consumers are now paying almost as much as they did in July for pork chops, loins and bacon."

Here is a drop of more than 30 per cent in the price of live hogs in two months, with the price still tending downward. There has been a drop in wholesale prices, too, though not in proportion to the price of animals on the hoof. Retail prices have scarcely been affected in most sections.

Surely, in a properly conducted industry, a 30 per cent drop in the price paid the producer of hogs should reduce retail prices by a similar percentage. The effect should be felt quickly in fresh pork. If chops, for example, were selling in July at 50 cents a pound, a mere consumer would expect them to sell around 35 cents now.

Somehow it doesn't work that way. Pigs may be pigs, but in the matter of price they have little relation to pork.

There has been a vast amount of loose, general talk by public officials about profiteering. Why don't they take concrete matters like this and look into them, and inform the public as to every step in the progress of the foodstuff from producer to consumer, with the expenses incurred and profit made?

TRIPLE ALLIANCE IN LEADING INDUSTRIES.

The famous "triple alliance" of railroads, miners and transport workers in Great Britain may soon have a counterpart in the United States. The United Mine Workers are preparing to associate themselves more closely with the railroad brotherhoods. A conference is to be held soon at which an effort will be made to adopt a plan of co-operation. Each group of workers will help the other to get what it wants in the matter of wages, hours, etc., and the nationalization of railroads and mines will be pressed with all the vigor of both organizations.

This plan, if carried out, will make an extremely powerful labor combination. The United Mine Workers are said to be already the strongest labor union in the world. Together with the railroad workers, they would constitute a body of considerably more than

1,000,000 men. They would derive much support, too, from other industries belonging to the federated labor. If the coal workers were successfully organized, there would be the possibility of a trade alliance completely dominating the industry of the country.

The railroad-mining combination is not at all unnatural. The men point out that the railroads cannot run without coal and the mines cannot operate without cars. A tie-up of either industry would soon tie up the other. A tie-up of both, needless to say, would tie up the whole system of American industry.

The movement will be watched with interest and also with misgivings. The United States, like the rest of the world, seems to be on the verge of momentous industrial developments. They may turn out well or ill. At present there is no telling. It is probably safe, however, to count on the sanity of human nature and the essential fairness of the American spirit not to go to radical extremes or work deep and lasting injustice to any class.

LET THEM ALL EXPLAIN.

The spruce probe has strewn some insinuations upon a number of Oregon's citizens who have been in the public eye for many years. The Observer hopes there is a mistake and that no Oregon man is guilty of taking advantage of this government at a time when a world war threatened to choke off civilization. At a time when Union county boys, and other boys in the state, were having their lives in the bullet of the Hun, it would be a sad and despicable condition to have some of our loudest praters about patriotism be sharing profits from spruce companies and government contracts at so much, plus 10 per cent.

The names of these gentlemen who have always stood on a high moral plane and have shouted "Stop, thief!" to Oregon citizens, are well known now as the different press reports have told of their alleged connection, and it is now up to them to "come clean" and tell the people the truth. No joking about "coverdraf" and "sour condition" will suffice. The state demands to know the truth. If the Warren Spruce company is in bad and if it has sinned "prominent citizens" who could help them here and at Washington, it is high time the exposure was made.

TEDDY, YOU ARE ALL RIGHT.

Oregon has had a visit from Theodore Roosevelt, son of his father whose popularity in this state and in the nation knew no bounds. The boy is all right. He is a chip from the old block. Blood will tell. He came into Oregon and preached 100 per cent Americanism. He has no use for the mollyshouse nor the slacker. The young man who hid behind some excuse to keep from following the flag is no friend of Theodore Roosevelt or any of his kind. The American Legion will attend to a few of these cases as time goes on, and there will be an element in America who will find they did not get by although they thought at the time they had succeeded. Ending of the war merely put such chaps as young Teddy on the firing line. They are all sharpshooters and they are after the fellow who had a streak of yellow, and the fellow who deep down in his heart holds allegiance to another country, yet makes his living under the Stars and Stripes. And if you will but stop and think you will understand what a power young Teddy the thousand boys from Union county who are just like, and the other millions of the same kind in the nation, will make. It will be a power unswayed by politics, but one that will overthrow the hood-worned rogues.

species that have had a good deal to say about things in both parties. It looks very much like a new deal is coming and Roosevelt and his fellows will be doing the dealing. And why shouldn't they?

AN UNTIMELY DEATH.

The accident which closed the life of George H. Rush took a man who was in his prime. His best years were before him. And he was all man. Nature had endowed him with ability, for his work as a builder is everywhere to be seen in the Northwest. He did honest work, hence he had a reputation over several states for being a first class builder. At the time of his death he was erecting a school building at Haines and one at La Grande. The country needed him and needed his services. But the hand of fate works in a mysterious manner, and it was little thought that today George H. Rush would be dead. The automobile accident was out of the ordinary for it occurred in an open country and in broad daylight on a railroad crossing between Baker and La Grande.

Local people who saw the President at Portland were pleased, and such Democrats as Postmaster E. E. Bragg assert without reservation that he is even a bigger man than he has been represented. And Mr. Bragg assures The Observer that there is not an ounce of partisanship in his decision. However that may be, there is no question but what the President strengthened himself and the League of Nations cause in Oregon by his visit. It will take a visit from Hiram to learn how strong the opposition to him really is.

The Prince of Wales is a better man than his father in one respect, at least. Up in the Canadian Northwest the other day he distinguished himself at a cowboy exhibition by riding an "untamed bronco." Remember how royal and imperial did fall of a horse and get hurt while reviewing some British troops?

Hogs have been going down, but pork hasn't—proving that in the case of food, two things equal to the same thing are not essentially equal to each other. The middleman defies even mathematics.

Meanwhile, Thrift Stamps haven't gone up a cent. That is, in cost. You can always get more for them when you sell them.

Marshal Fack is taking a vacation. So is the Kaiser.

FORUM

THE GRANDE RONDE WATER PROBLEM

There is at the very least 20,000 acres of dry, arid, non-productive land in the Grande Ronde Valley, which is not producing an annual crop of any value whatever, and which has but little value for pasture purposes. This land is not worth to exceed \$25 per acre in its present condition. With water to properly irrigate this land, it would grow valuable annual crops of hay and grain, and would be worth not less than \$100 per acre. Here is a loss in land value to the county of \$1,500,000.

In addition to this there is at least 50,000 acres of semi-arid land in the Grande Ronde valley, which for want of water to properly irrigate the same does not produce annually over from one-third to one-half of an average crop. During the present season the spring grain sown in this valley amounted to 44,744 acres upon the greater part of which the crop was an entire failure on account of the want of the water to properly irrigate the same. It is safe to say that this 50,000 acres of land would be increased in value at least \$25 per acre if water was available to properly irrigate the same. This would add to the land value of the county the sum of \$1,250,000.

Again, the flood waters of the Grande Ronde and Catherine Creek annually overflow and render unfit for cultivation a large body of the most productive lands in the Grande Ronde Valley. The parties in charge of the present drainage district organized to drain these overflowed lands estimate them at about 15,000 acres. A system that would control these flood waters and prevent this annual overflow would add to these lands an additional value of at least \$25 per acre, or the sum of \$3,750,000.

It is thus clear that the solving of the water problem of the Grande Ronde Valley will add to the land value of the county the sum of \$6,500,000.

Assuming that all of this land was planted to wheat crops, the 20,000 acres of arid lands would produce with proper irrigation at least 25 bushels per acre, or a production of 500,000 bushels. The 50,000 acres of semi-arid lands with proper irrigation would be increased at least 20 bushels per acre, and the 15,000 acres of overflowed lands would be increased 10 bushels per acre. This would be an annual increase of the crop production of the county of 2,100,000 bushels of grain, which at the present price would net to the farmer at the

very least fifty cents per bushel, or \$1,700,000 annually. The loss to the farmers of this valley this season on spring grain alone for want of water to properly irrigate this 44,744 acres, amounted to at the very least 500,000 bushels of grain, or a net loss of over \$450,000.

How it is possible to add \$6,575,000 to the land values of the Grande Ronde Valley, and to increase the annual crop production by at least \$1,700,000 will be discussed in our next communication.

T. H. CRAWFORD,  
H. M. DU BOIS.

ASK ADAMLESS EDEN

Illinois Girls Want to Have Colony in Far West.

Suggest That Governor of Wyoming Procure for Them a "Bad Lands" Tract as Soon as Possible.

Bloomington, Ill.—A group of Kane county girls plan to found an "Adamless Eden" in Wyoming or some other far western state.

Miss Nellie Grant is sponsor for the movement and has written to Gov. R. D. Carey for his assistance in starting a woman's colony far from the haunts of man. In making her unique request, Miss Grant stated that the party will be made up of twenty, of whom ten are employed in a watch factory, seven are housekeepers, two are nurses and one is a school teacher.

All are dissatisfied with their lot and assert that the future holds forth nothing that is sufficiently encouraging to warrant their remaining at home. They believe that they can make a success of farming and would like to obtain a section of land, 630 acres, in some unsettled region, far from a railroad and little frequented by man.

Miss Grant suggested to the Wyoming executive a tract in southwestern Wyoming known as the "Bad Lands," and which is really a desert. No man will be allowed about the premises.

Governor Carey admitted that it was the most unusual request that he had ever received. He turned the letter over to the immigration commissioner with a suggestion that he do everything in his power to find such a tract for the party from Illinois.

The young women are ready to pay for the tract, but have limited funds, and can only finance a section that has not yet felt the advancing tide of civilization in the way of price. Some members of the proposed colony object to Wyoming and believe that Montana or Idaho offer greater possibilities.

The decision, however, has been left with Miss Grant and the choice will follow the investigation of various sites now being made. In anticipation of the establishment of the colony, the various members are studying diligently the subject of farming and stock raising.

They are ambitious in their plans and propose to utilize tractors and trucks instead of horses, and will introduce other up-to-date methods on the western frontier. They are also studying irrigation. All of the young women are becoming familiar with a revolver and rifle and will be prepared to defend their colony against any unwelcome intruders.

An effort is being made to close the deal by fall so that the trip to the West can be made by the first of next year. It may be necessary to erect some buildings. The young women say that they will be prepared to do everything necessary in the way of constructing a domicile.

LYNCHED AS CHURCH LOOTER

Mexicans Slay Man Accused of Stealing Jewels Off Image in Village Edifice.

Mexico City.—Details of the lynching of Juan Galvan, a prominent resident of the village of Zaragoza, in the state of San Luis Potosi, have been received in the capital.

El Democrata, in publishing the story, declares that this is the first instance of lynching recorded in Mexico. Galvan was publicly accused by the pastor of a church in Zaragoza of robbing the image of a virgin in one of the churches of gold and jewels valued at \$5,000. The curate inflamed his hearers, who dragged Galvan from his home, built a gallows and tortured him until he died. The curate has been detained by the authorities.

Kitten Saves Master.

Holyoke, Col.—"White Paws," a kitten, saved the life of H. G. Mills. The kitten, which follows its owner as constantly as a dog, was riding with Mills in his automobile when engine trouble developed. Mills crawled under the car to investigate and found himself with striking distance of a giant rattlesnake coiled. The kitten leaped from the car and sank its teeth into the rattler's head, killing it. The snake, which measured nine feet in length and had twelve rattles, has been sent to an Eastern institution for mounting. Pledge declares it to be the largest rattler ever seen in this section.

Laying a Carpet.

In laying a carpet in a room where there is a fireplace, the section covering the hearth or hearthstone should be cut down its center by the sheers, then the carpet should be extended over the sides, so as to form two flaps, which should be turned under.

WANTED—Clean cotton rags suitable for Observer office.

