

Medford Daily Tribune

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LES MAJESTE IN AMERICA.

The first case of attempted punishment of the crime of les majeste in America since the days when John Adams, puffed with pride, wrecked the federal party by attempting to suppress the press over a century ago, is the remarkable "libel" suit brought against the New York World and Indianapolis News by the government in which President Roosevelt, Charles P. Taft, J. P. Morgan and others are said to have been libeled in the account of the Panama canal purchase.

If the persons in question had been libeled, they could have brought proceedings in the state courts, as ordinary mortals are forced to do, but instead the whole power of the government is invoked. A grand jury is summoned at Washington and at the instance of the attorney general of the United States indictments against the newspapers and their editors are returned under the English common law of 1662, long before the government was created.

The United States government was in no ways libeled. If the charges made by the newspapers were true, the assertions reflected upon individuals only, not the government. Ample recourse, both criminal and civil, is provided under state laws for those against whom such a crime has been committed.

The president of the United States has no right to use the machinery of the government to strike at newspapers that print something he does not like. It is a rank usurpation of power to which the government employees lend themselves to earn Mr. Roosevelt's "gratitude," and intended solely to gratify the executive's spleen against a political enemy, a prostitution of power for personal revenge, a stain upon Roosevelt's record in the presidency.

Every president of the United States has been fiercely assailed in times gone by—few of them more bitterly than Washington, Lincoln and Cleveland, yet none of those who have presided over the destinies of the nation ever usurped the power of the government to strike at critics, to "get even" with a newspaper—the role of a tyrant in a petty principality.

GOOD ROADS MOVEMENT.

For two years more people of Oregon must wait for legislation that will render good roads possible. In the final flurry at the last session, all attempted legislation was killed by the house in a fit of pique over the senate's attitude on the normals.

At the next general election, people will vote upon a constitutional amendment permitting counties to bond themselves, something impossible at the present time. If this should pass, each county will be able to issue bonds for highways.

Last September the state Good Roads association was formed for the express purpose of agitating for better highways and securing needed legislation. Beyond raising a little money to pay a lecturer, nothing was accomplished, however. Some of the Salem members were active in the interest of good roads at the legislature, but no one else. Senator Johnson introduced the good roads bill, which was amended to suit the senate, and would have remedied the situation had it become a law.

Had the Good Roads association kept a large lobby at Salem, working continuously and persistently, the bill would have passed. But to spend the money on lecturers who have not interest enough in the work to even lobby for the movement when they live at Salem, wastes it.

The good roads movement will continue to grow and another two years will see the necessity of good roads so universally recognized that even the bogey man of high taxes cannot stampede its supporters.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON SHOWS GREAT GROWTH

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, Eugene, March 2.—Registration at the university for the second semester has been practically completed, and the total shows an increase of 40 per cent over last year. The freshmen class, composed entirely of graduates of four-year high schools of academies, numbers 250 members, and a striking feature of the freshman registration is that nearly 30 per cent of them are from high schools outside of Oregon. The number of students registered in the colleges of liberal arts and engineering is now nearly 600, and the grand total, including summer school, law, medicine and music, is over 1100.

WILL MAKE SURVEY OF WOOD RIVER IN KLAMATH

A survey is to be made of Wood River from the Klamath lake to the head of navigation to determine the cost of the necessary improvements to open the river to general navigation by steamboats. Congress has appropriated \$385,000 to be expended on the rivers and harbors of Oregon. The measure makes a lump appropriation for the maintenance of works heretofore begun, the amount of this sum being intended to continue the preservation of such works until July 1, 1910.

JUDICIAL BILL PROVIDING COURT HERE IS PASSED

WASHINGTON, March 2.—The house of representatives by a vote of 150 to 50 agreed to the senate amendment to the Washington judicial bill, authorizing the appointment of an additional federal judge in Oregon. Senator Patton will be the new judge. Of this there is no longer any doubt, for his legislative relations with the incoming president and Mr. Taft's known regard for Mr. Patton's legal attainments are ample assurance that Mr. Patton will be offered the judgeship, and it is also known that the appointment would be very acceptable to him. Moreover, confidential sources who have been looking into the case are now agreed that Mr. Patton will be eligible for appointment to this judgeship at the expiration of his term in the senate.

ASSISTANT TREASURER OF DEFUNCT COMPANY ARRESTED

CHICAGO, March 2.—P. H. Robbins, assistant treasurer of the defunct A. Booth company, "fish trust," was arrested by the United States attorney today and was released on \$250,000 bonds. He was indicted Saturday for conspiracy.

FRA DIAVOLO IN DRESS REHEARSAL

Performance by Local Opera Company Will Be Really Worth While—Charlie Hazzelrigg Has Them Thoroughly Drilled.

It was with a feeling that Charlie Hazzelrigg was imposing upon my good nature that I accepted his invitation to witness the dress rehearsal of "Fra Diavolo" by the Medford Opera Company on Monday evening. I felt that I would be tremendously bored. Local talent generally does here one, and last night when the hour approached, I bitterly regretted a rash promise that I would be an honor.

I went—I stayed—and my only regret today is that there is not to be another dress rehearsal where I might again constitute what the press agents would deem an "enthusiastic audience."

Medford is an exception to the general rule of the smaller cities in many particulars, and tonight's performance will demonstrate one additional exception. A local talent production here does not have one—it is really worth while.

For the old stars—Nellie Hazzelrigg, Ed Andrews, A. C. Burgess, F. W. Walters—but little need be said. They have retained a fund of stage tricks and of the actor's art, and now a show to themselves. The minor principals—Miss Eifer, Dr. Danner, George Merritt, W. Quisenberry and others, are exceptionally good for amateurs. They have been well drilled and while, of course, they betray the fact that they are but beginners, a home audience will be surprised by the manner in which they handle their lines.

The chorus has been well drilled and they show the effect of it. Medford's best voices have all been pressed into service and under the direction of Mr. Hazzelrigg have been brought into a wonderful degree of harmony.

It is a pity that an audience cannot see Charlie himself in action. Imagine a man chewing savagely at a cigar, clumping the piano with one hand, beating time with the other, watching every move on the part of the principals, detaching every false note in chorus and orchestra alike, giving the electrician the cue for the lights, all at one and the same time—that is Charlie in action. And when he doesn't like any thing he says or just ask one of those in the company—savage will do, for they have all felt the sting of his sarcastic vocabulary.

For instance: The full chorus is on the stage. They have let their voices soar to the greatest possible volume. The orchestra is adding to the tuneful din. Suddenly Charlie's fist comes down with a bang. Instant silence. Then—"Great suffering snakes!" (some member of the orchestra), look on the list bar of sound; see that third note. Why in—didn't you hit it?" Then in a tone of deepest injury—"Now, you know better than that. Why do you do it? Now, all together—" and away they go again until another false note is struck. So too Charlie has been working for weeks—and work like that counts.

Those who miss "Fra Diavolo" will miss seeing something that is really worthwhile. X. V. Z.

S. C. Hartman and family, who arrived Saturday to visit Henry Cornell, a relative, who is seriously ill at his home in the Antelope valley, were forced to return Monday to their Roseburg home on account of the serious illness of their baby, who is threatened with pneumonia. Dr. Seely was called to attend the little one before departure.

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