

The Ontario Argus

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FREE SPEECH AND A FREE PRESS.

There has been a great deal said and written of late about free speech and freedom of the press and indeed there is much to be said considering both of these doctrines of democracy. Without them there would not long be a democracy to uphold them.

The socialists, i. e., the extremists in that party, the L. W. W. and others of this ilk conceive free speech as a license to abuse liberty, on the other hand the ultra conservatives think it is a privilege to condemn utterly any idea to which they do not agree. There has been an un-American intolerance on the part of each one of them.

Concerning a free press the manifestations are evident. The press, as an institution, is itself to blame for this. The extreme partisanship of the great bulk of the journals of America has brot the natural reaction. The American people are, and have been for years, aware of the fact that partisan papers can not always be relied upon, especially during seasons of political controversy, and that, therefore, is the reason why one so often hears the remark, "You can't believe that statement for it appeared in such and such a paper." Democrats say this of Republican papers and Republicans as often say it of Hearst or other mug-wump sheets that seek only sensationalism.

In assuming so partisan a policy and by becoming apologists for a political party—any political party—a newspaper belies its name. It is no longer a newspaper in the strict sense of the word—it is a medium of propaganda with news features added, to give that propaganda currency, and sufficient sugar coating to secure circulation.

In their news columns, however, the great bulk of the newspapers have taken a broader and better view of their duty, while the news gathering agencies have been almost blameless in their impartiality.

Free speech and a free press are the very bulwark of liberty, and it is therefore of grave moment that the proposed sedition bill is so worded as to preserve that freedom and yet protect the nation against the attacks of those who would destroy. Even the partisan press is loyal to the government of the United States, and in the late war proved its attitude in service.

The public while agreeing with the purpose of the authors of the sedition bills, does not, we believe, desire to establish an autocracy of the postmaster general and open the way to gross abuses of power.

The extreme partisanship of the press will gradually correct itself. There is growing tendency to throw off the strict party ties, for the newspaper publisher is human. No more than any other man does he care to be a red rag tied to the tail of anyone's kite. Freedom of action is as much desired by editors as by labor leaders—it is in truth the essence of their existence.

There might well be provided some way to regulate newspapers, some way to keep irresponsible individuals from engaging in the business. There might be provided some way of so training reporters that they will become more accurate, and less prone to jump at conclusions, so that when they do write their stories they will be as accurate as human beings can make them. But unfortunately this can not be done by law. It must come in the natural development of the business. The public can regulate this thru patronage. If the public would discredit the partisan paper, the unreliable paper, the scandal monger, and the sensational yellow journal, the end would be achieved.

The hope for a free press therefore rests with the press and the public, and we believe the time is coming when better conditions will prevail. Since the public must secure the information upon which it bases its attitude toward, and action upon public questions from the press, the public is entitled to have that information accurate, and uncolored by partisan bias, and when in sufficient numbers it insists on that it will get it.

CONSTRUCTIVE CO-OPERATION.

City business men could profit greatly from the example which the farmers of Malheur county are setting them in the program which the Farm Bureau has undertaken to solve. Indeed the accomplishment of that program will mark the greatest forward movement that the county has known.

A glance at the ends which the farmers would attain, the mere statement of them is impressive, while a study of and contemplation of what they entail is keen duty, wide and exact knowledge of many subjects further impresses one with the great ability needed in the individual to be an up to date rancher.

How many city men, for example, think themselves competent to engage in the solution of one or more of the following problems: Scientific co-operative marketing; soil improvement and irrigation; crop improvement; live stock improvement; pest and disease control; community welfare; community life and home improvement? Yet that is the list of things which the ranchers have determined to study and to follow out until better methods and better conditions have been achieved.

Of course the ranchers do not assume that they will add the last word on these subjects; they do not believe that they will find a panacea for all the ills of the body politic as it functions toward them; but they do believe and they will accomplish betterments.

This will indeed be true if the ranchers as a body grasp the situation as do those in the Oregon Slope bureau on Dead Ox Flat as evidenced at their meeting last Friday night at the Park school house. The business men of the towns in Malheur county may well study the work that the farmers have undertaken and assist them to accomplish their ends, and take a lesson from them in laying out for themselves an equally comprehensive program. With each endeavoring and constantly applying themselves to such efforts there is no limit to the possibilities of development that can be reached in this region.

FIGHTING PAT.

Representative P. J. Gallagher made a bid for fame at the legislature the other day in his offer to personal combat with the Portland Telegram's legislative correspondent. What is more to the point, Mr. Gallagher's constituents will uphold him in his position. There is no reason in common decency why any man just because he happens to be a newspaper man, has a right to assail the character of others. Let the Telegram man confine himself to printing facts, the public will draw its own conclusions.

In this case Mr. Gallagher took up the gauge of battle not because he was himself attacked, but to defend the honor of an associate. The Celtic blood of Malheur's solon could not stand the scurrilous attitude of the Telegram and he just naturally wanted to fight. We are sorry that the Telegram's representative did not better uphold the honor of the fraternity and meet the challenge. We would like to have witnessed the encounter, and without knowing the Telegram man would place a small bet on Pat.

BEAUTIFYING ONTARIO.

There is no doubt but that the First National Bank's Civic Improvement contest will do a great deal in furthering the city beautiful idea in Ontario.

It is certain that there are enough people in Ontario who desire to improve their homes and who have the sporting instinct to demonstrate their ability to enter the contest. It will give them some fun in the effort and the city will benefit by the example set. The bank has performed a public service in taking this lead in so worthy an effort.

THE POWER QUESTION.

The question of power rates for irrigation is the most important one before the people of the Snake river valley today. If the contention of the company is correct then there must be a change in the crops which the ranchers raise, for it is general belief that alfalfa will not give a sufficient return to stand a fifty per cent increase in present rates.

The welfare of the rancher and that of the company are essential to the growth of this section. There is no desire on the part of the public to treat the company unfairly. It is entitled to a fair return on its invest-

ment, actual investment, and for reasonable charges in the cost of service; but the public has the right to know exactly what the cost is and how the figures are reached.

There is, however, a more vital question, and that is the quality of service rendered by the company. Many of the ranchers declare that the company is charging for service which it does not give. This they declare is done by measuring the power at the peak load of the early morning hours, and thereafter the power dwindles until it is from 15 to 20 per cent lower than when the company officials measure it.

Before the company can come to the bar of public opinion and ask for consideration it must clean its hands of this charge. There is no reason, if the charge of the ranchers be true, that the company should collect for services it does not give any more than any other business man can collect for goods he does not sell.

The company's contract for power must be made a bilateral one, in which for that it receives it gives that for which the contract calls. When that is done there is no doubt that the first step will have been taken to secure an adjustment of the power rates which will be satisfactory. In the meantime the users are taking the right course of action in seeing to it that their interests are protected.

THE LITTLE REGULATOR

It is convenient for a county to have a regulator, some one who knows all about everything, from the proper arrangement of the calendar to the proper awards that should be paid county officials of every degree and station. Such wisdom is so rare that it deserves notice. It is a great loss to the nation and the world that the services of such a regulator is confined to so small a territory, especially when Europe is in so dire a need for that service.

Of course, anyone that does even a part of what the regulator thinks should be done is wrong—even tho that portion had the approval of the regulator. In Malheur county nothing should be done that is not all that the regulator deemed fit and proper, that is evident. Maybe so, maybe so.

Hides, Furs and Pelts

Ranchers, Stockmen, Trappers:

If you have any hides, furs or pelts send them to us. We pay the highest market prices. We pay cash.

Rogers & Company

Ontario, Oregon Telephone 185-W

A. CREED

I believe in you Oregon.

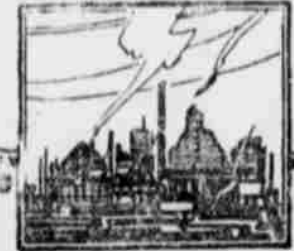
I believe in your immense resources—your timbered hillsides, your waving fields of grain, your luscious fruits.

I believe in your men, Oregon—in their energy and ability to convert your unexcelled raw materials into finely finished manufactured products.

I believe the road to growth and prosperity for Oregon lies in the loyal patronage of Oregon industries by Oregon people.

Buy Home Products

Associated Industries of Oregon



DREAMLAND

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23

STREET PARADE

NIGHT 8:15

Adults \$1. plus Tax
Children 50c plus Tax

FREE BAND
CONCERT 7:15

BARNES

Merry Minstrels

20 - PEOPLE - 20

A SAILOR C. W. PRESENTING A TWO-HOUR PERFORMANCE OF

Jolly, Jingling, Jovial Jesters

The Big Show for Ladies and Children

Not Moving Pictures

"Festive Feast of Frolicking Fun"

A Company of Novel Surprises—A Veritable Incubator of Laughs

Brassy - Razy - Jazz

Black Face Singers and Dancers

Seats on Sale at Ontario Pharmacy

Our Allies

This bank is an ally of the farmer, stock-grower and merchant, bound together by an unwritten law for the advancement of private interests and the development of Ontario and vicinity. You can join this league by becoming a depositor of this Bank.

Ontario National Bank

Oldest Bank in Grant, Harney and Malheur Counties