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# ST. JOHNS REVIEW

Historical Society

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Devoted to the Interests of the Peninsula, the Manufacturing Center of the Northwest

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## SQUARE DEAL AND FAIR PLAY

### Should be Accorded Ferry Co. in the Matter

## SAY SEVERAL CITIZENS

In order to get the opinion of the general public regarding the purchase of the present ferry boat and franchise, the Review man interviewed several prominent citizens the past week. If these men can be taken as a true criterion of public sentiment the city will undoubtedly purchase the present service. One gentleman stated that the St. Johns Transportation Co. took the matter up when it was in a much run down and dilapidated condition. Poor service and indifferent management had made it a great annoyance to parties desiring to cross the river, and one had to await the convenience of the management until he could cross in any degree of safety. The new company put in as good service as their means would allow, paid a big price for the slips and other apparatus to the previous holder and did all in their power to make the service as good as possible. While they may have made some mistakes and perhaps paid in some instances a rather high price for some of their apparatus, yet they did this in good faith in order to hasten construction as much as possible. Therefore, he believed the city should purchase the boat and appurtenances if the price was not exorbitant.

Another gentleman stated he believed the boat should be purchased by the city. He did not think it right that the city should give the present company a franchise for a certain number of years and then install a free ferry in competition. He said that very few people had any true conception of what it costs to install a ferry service, and that only men experienced in these matters should judge as to what the property is worth. It was difficult to determine just what the franchise was worth, but an estimate could also be placed upon it by the same committee.

Still another property owner said that these gentlemen now holding the franchise had put in same all their available cash, had constructed a good ferry system to take the place of a bad one, were men who had the interest of the city at heart, and now since it was on a paying basis it was only right that the city should at least pay what it cost the company and a consideration besides for their business and franchise. He stated that if the city threw the proposition down and undertook to construct a new boat it would possibly be a year before it could be completed and installed. He believed the boat was good for several years yet, and at the end of that time if a new vessel was necessary allow Multnomah county to furnish it.

Several other business men and private citizens expressed themselves as being favorable to the proposition if the system could be purchased at a reasonable figure, while one man believed that the boat was too small, and in other ways not quite good enough for St. Johns.

Several other gentlemen thought the boat was shaped badly, machinery was not first class, believed the company wanted too much for it and that a new boat would be far better, even if it did cost \$30,000 or \$40,000. These however, were either small property holders, or did not own any property, while the ones favoring giving a reasonable price were all heavy realty owners.

It is a matter that should be earnestly considered, the obstacles the company has met and overcome taken into account, the good work they accomplished when they replaced the old ferry with a modern one, and what a franchise to operate a ferry across the river at this point is worth, it is up to the people to decide what they shall do in the matter—whether the city shall purchase the present ferry or construct a new one. Fair play and good judgment should prevail, and the question should be looked at from all points of view.

Oscar Mitchell of Montana was here the past week on a visit with relatives and friends

## GAS PEOPLE ARE ANXIOUS

### Want to Get Busy in St. Johns at Once

## MONEY SEEMS PLENTY

Another long session of council was held Tuesday night, it being past the midnight hour when the motion for adjournment was made, and even then there was so much business confronting the body that an adjourned meeting to be held Thursday evening was deemed necessary to catch up with the business on hand.

Roll call showed all members present with the exception of Alderman Windle. Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

As there were several representatives of the St. Johns Gas Light & Heat company present, the gas business was then taken up. Attorney McGarry of Portland acted as spokesman, and he advanced the information that Henry Hewitt, a multi-millionaire, and other capitalists were now backing the proposition, and that they had secured controlling interests in the Economy Gas company of Portland, and that competition with the Portland Gas company would ensue. He stated that they intended to furnish good gas, so good in fact that it will greatly excel the product now furnished the inhabitants of Portland, that they were able to spend one million or two million if necessary to give the people good service and satisfactory gas. He objected on behalf of the new company to certain clauses of the amended franchise as drawn up by Attorney Collier, one in particular relating to the quality of gas as specified in the ordinance. He said the manner in which it was worded meant nothing, and to prove his contention he presented W. S. Dole, a practical gas man, to council, who also asserted that the clause was not properly worded and that it was impossible to comply with the requirements as stated. Mr. McGarry then stated that representatives of the company desired to meet with council or a committee appointed for the purpose to discuss the matter thoroughly. He said they wanted to get down to business with as little delay as possible, that several tracts of land had already been secured on both sides of the river, and that an option pending the decision of council regarding the franchise had been obtained on several other tracts in St. Johns. They were willing, he said, to do anything reasonable in the matter and concluded by urging haste on the part of the authorities. Mayor Brice then appointed Messrs. Collier, Eason, Davis and Jones as a committee to confer with these gentlemen at the earliest date possible so that the matter could be brought before the council in such shape that they could act in an intelligent manner.

Attorney G. J. Perkins was present in the interest of Mrs. Caples regarding the proposed extension of Richmond street. He presented a communication bearing upon the matter, which the recorder read. It was in the form of a "last final" contract with the city in which Mrs. Caples agreed to dedicate a 60 foot strip through her entire tract for the extension of Richmond street and improve same at her own expense, also to dedicate a 60 foot strip connecting Leonard with Richmond street. She seriously objected to laying out the street as proposed on motion of council last week, asserting that such a street would utterly destroy the southern portion of her property, which is of far more value than the street, that she would take the matter to the circuit court and even to the supreme court if necessary to establish her so-called rights. The way her plan runs it makes it necessary to condemn the three-cornered piece of land on which O. E. Learned's real estate office is now located. Mrs. Caples agrees to begin the improvement of the streets as soon as condemnation proceedings are instituted against the Severance property. Council deemed the easiest and least costly way the wisest, and consequently the former motion was reconsidered, and the engineer instructed to prepare plans for improvement of this street as per plan No. 2, or accord-

## ST. JOHNS GIVEN A BIG BOOST

### Attorney George J. Perkins Tells in An Interesting Manner Many Logical Reasons Why St. Johns is Destined to be Greatest City in the Northwest

## HAS ALL THE EAR MARKS OF A BIG CITY

Following is an article from the pen of George J. Perkins, secretary of the St. Johns Commercial club, published in the February issue of the Portland Chamber of Commerce Bulletin. The article deals entirely with St. Johns, and while in the main it covers a number of features previously mentioned in The Review, several new points are brought in, and then a good thing cannot be mentioned too frequently. The article is well written and Mr. Perkins deserves credit for his good work for St. Johns, for few if any men have done more for the progress of this city than he. The following will be found to be good reading matter to send to friends in the East:

St. Johns is the natural shipping and manufacturing district for Portland; its boundary line connecting with the boundary of that city and being situated between the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. The distance directly across the peninsula from the St. Johns city dock to the Columbia River is about three miles, and the distance from the boundary line separating Portland and St. Johns to the confluence of the two rivers, about three and one-half miles. St. Johns has more navigable river water frontage than any city of its size in the United States.

Besides the unequalled water advantages, it is encircled by the tracks of the O. R. & N. Co., and the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway Company has just completed its new line across the peninsula, touching the southern portion of the city. The tracks of the latter company are utilized by the Northern Pacific, the Great Northern and the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroads, affording a water grade for these lines from the Pacific Coast to the plateau lines of the Cascade Mountains. The Southern Pacific Railway Company also has a switch connection with the O. R. & N. Co. into St. Johns, thus making practically five transcontinental railroads into the city.

The tract occupied by the City of St. Johns seems to have been especially designed by nature for a great shipping and manufacturing center; but not for that purpose alone. The natural elevation of the ground, sloping gradually from the center of the peninsula to either side toward the rivers, renders the construction of a perfect sewer system simple and inexpensive; the refreshing breeze from the Columbia; the plain view of Mount Hood, Mount St. Helens, the various foothills, and the rapid production of myriad flowers and green lawns, are great inducements for the

homeseeker. Strange to say, however, the advantages of this locality, so highly favored by nature, seem to have been overlooked by the great captains of industry and home seekers until recent years. Four years ago the population of St. Johns was not more than five hundred; the limited number of its industries were scarcely noticed; its assessed valuation was about \$200,000 and the payrolls of its industries aggregated about \$500 a month. It now has a population of not less than 4000; its assessed valuation is nearly \$3,000,000, and its normal monthly payroll is between sixty and seventy thousand dollars. Its principal industries consist of two sawmills, a shipbuilding plant, the Port of Portland dry-docks, the Marine Iron Works, one flouring mill, one woolen mill, one machine shop, one veneering and basket factory. The city has under construction, and has almost completed, a new city dock, costing \$60,000, which when completed, will be amply sufficient to accommodate the largest ocean going vessel. Swift & Co. is at the present time constructing a mammoth packing plant a short distance from the city limits, and this plant, when in operation, will give employment to some 5000 people. The Monarch Lumber Company is also constructing a large mill near the Swift plant, which will cost upwards of a half-million dollars, and will give employment to more than five hundred people. Many other concerns, such as the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company and the West Coast Lumber Company, have purchased large and attractive sites in St. Johns and vicinity, and will evidently construct plants in the near future.

St. Johns, like many other thriving localities, fell slightly in the wake of the recent financial flurry which somewhat impeded its progress for a time, but caused no reaction. There was not a single failure in the city, and in the year 1908, 106 building permits were issued, as compared with 102 the previous year.

The political, educational, social and religious development is commensurate with its commercial growth. The City of St. Johns has a handsome city hall, costing \$12,000, two large public school buildings, twenty-two teachers, and about 600 pupils. There are six churches within the city, Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, Christian, United Evangelical and Adventist denominations. It is not difficult for the logical mind to comprehend the cause of the rapid development of St. Johns and the Peninsula, nor to predict its future progress. We have but to

contemplate the vast fertile and protective territory lying west of the Rocky Mountains between Mexico and Canada, its soil yielding bountifully every vegetable product necessary to please the appetite and sustain life. Its forests must be, and are relied upon for the major portion of the world's supply of lumber and timber, and its mines rich with mineral properties. The people cannot afford to, and will not, remain indifferent to such an empire of natural resources. This fact has been clearly demonstrated by the daily influx of farmers, laborers and capital during the last few years from the over-crowded cities and exhausted farmlands of the South, East and Middle West. But notwithstanding the inroads made upon this vast and productive territory in recent years by the agriculturist, miner and laborer, the ground is barely broken for development—only the hardships that necessarily accompany the pioneer have been removed. There are but six railroads that cross this territory from the Pacific Ocean to the Rocky Mountains, and of these, five pass through this peninsula and four directly through the City of St. Johns. Besides the railroads leading from the north, east and south, two of the largest navigable rivers wash the south and northwest boundaries of our city and unite just beyond the northwest boundary, forming a great commercial highway to the Pacific Ocean.

With these seven commercial arteries coursing through the richest timber, mineral, cereal, pasturing and fruit country in the world—a country just opened to development, and upon which a large portion of the world must rely for lumber, food and cloth product, and concentrating at this favored spot, the logical distributing point to all parts of the world, both rail and water, and for exports and imports, can the most consummate pessimist, with reason, argue that the future of this section of the West is not assured, or that investments on the peninsula are unsafe?

J. E. Kirk and family expect to leave the first of next week for Mercer county, Pennsylvania, where they will make their home for the next three or four years. Oregon will certainly look good to them after a residence of that duration in the Keystone state. The best wishes of their St. Johns friends, however, will attend them to their new home.

Mrs. Charles Brodeur is convalescing from a severe attack of illness.

## Beginning Operations

The Oregon Sienna Paint company, whose purchase of one acre of land at Meagley Junction was noted in The Review several weeks ago, has secured two additional acres adjoining this tract and commissioned Architect Legg, with offices in the Ainsworth building, to prepare plans for their new buildings. At present he is working on the plans for a three-story heavy mill 50x100 feet, to be used by them as a factory. This building will have a concrete basement and will be ready to be figured on about March 1. Later Mr. Legg will prepare plans for a drying house, which the paint factory will also erect.

## Made Good Record

The legislature has adjourned after a forty days' session, and Hon. K. C. Couch can now be found at his place of business on Philadelphia street. The record he made during the session is very gratifying and the people of St. Johns are now certain of the fact that they made no mistake when they aided in sending Mr. Couch to the legislature.

## Will Enlarge Works

J. T. Murphy, proprietor of the Modern Machine Works on Bradford street, has associated himself with a practical partner and the new firm has purchased a half block of ground adjoining the present plant and will at once enlarge their operations. Mr. Murphy has built up quite a trade since locating here, but has been somewhat hampered for lack of room. New machinery will be added and an up-to-date machine works installed.

The city dock is making good progress these days.

## GOOD PROSPECTS FOR OIL

### Local Men Seem to Have a Good Thing

## EXCITEMENT RUNS HIGH

The Eastern Oregon Oil & Gas Co., composed almost exclusively of St. Johns residents, is making great headway in the sale of their stock. All reports from their territory is very glowing and great excitement prevails among the residents of the region. Gas has been found in large quantities and scientific men claim it is only a question of a little further development until oil is found. The land owned by this company is situated in Malheur county, and the company owns 3840 acres. Following are the incorporators:

K. C. Couch, President, Ex-mayor of the City of St. Johns, present Representative 18th District, Multnomah county, Oregon, St. Johns, Oregon. T. W. Davidson, Vice president, Contractor and Director Central Ky., of Oregon, Union, Oregon. John A. Collier, Secretary and Treasurer, Attorney, St. Johns, Oregon. W. T. Pangle, Director Heilig Theater, Portland, Oregon. F. J. Catterlin, Real Estate Broker, Portland, Oregon. J. P. Wilbur, Director Union National Bank, Union, Oregon. Edward Wilson, Retired Capitalist, St. Johns, Oregon. E. F. Day, Retired Capitalist, St. Johns, Oregon. F. P. Drinker, Cashier First National Bank, St. Johns, Oregon. H. E. Collier, City Attorney of St. Johns, St. Johns, Oregon. W. H. King, Ex-mayor of the City of St. Johns, Oregon. J. S. McKinney, Real Estate Broker, St. Johns, Oregon.

Many men have made fortunes out of the oil business, as the following instances will show:

John A. Bunting, formerly a brakeman on the Southern Pacific, through investment of \$170 in California oil lands, became a millionaire.

Jos. Chanlor, formerly clerk in a store in Los Angeles, saw the opportunity offered by oil production, started to operate in a small way on borrowed money, and is now rated worth \$5,000,000.

Whittier & Green invested \$500 in a Kern River property, later selling the same for \$1,500,000.

The California Oil Fields Co. Ltd., own 7,000 acres of producing oil territory for which they have refused \$20,000,000.

In 1901 the production of oil in California amounted to only 8,000,000 barrels, and the oil was worth 19 cents per barrel. Today with a production of 40,000,000 barrels, California oil is bringing about \$1.00 per barrel.

Twelve hundred acres of undeveloped oil land situated in the West Coalinga oil field in California sold three months ago to the American Petroleum Company for \$2,000,000.

R. H. Rohrig, of Union, Oregon, says that while he was living in Colorado he was urged by a friend to invest in some "oil stock" in a company operating in the Colorado field that was just being opened up. Mr. Rohrig refused and at the same time made light of such an investment as being absolutely worthless. However his friend invested \$75 in stock and within six months was receiving monthly dividends that ranged from \$40 to \$83.

The stock of oil companies has advanced rapidly in value; many of the shares that sold originally for a few cents are now worth hundreds of dollars and are paying from 100 per cent to 1000 per cent dividends on the first price of stock.

One company with \$100,000 capital paid \$170,000 in dividends in 1907. Another company organized in 1906 sold stock at 3 cents per share. Within six months it had paid \$4 a share in dividends. A recent monthly dividend of the Confield & Chanlor Oil Co., was \$26 a share. The par value of the stock being \$1 a share and selling originally for 20 cents a share. The San Joaquin Oil Co., recently paid a monthly dividend of \$225 a share or \$225,000; The Reed Oil Co. was started with \$600 cash capital. In a little over a year it sold its holdings for \$1,800,000 and the present value of the property is estimated at over \$3,000,000. A recent monthly dividend amounted to

## OLD TIMERS HAVE BIG FUN

### Learning to Dance in the Modern Style

## STRANGE STEPS SHOWN

The regular meeting of the commercial club last Thursday evening was turned into a social affair in order to permit the members and their wives and friends to become better acquainted. A goodly crowd was in attendance, and the affair was greatly enjoyed. Prof. Gregg of Portland was present, and initiated a number of elderly members in the art of dancing. The gestures, the grimaces, the side stepping, hopping, bowing, scraping, skipping, twisting, bobbing, tripping, perspiring, slipping and grotesque movements made by some of the members from whose pates the hirsute adornments had long since departed, was highly amusing to the younger and more agile participants. When one or more steps were executed successfully a happy and gratified smile would steal over the beaming and perspiring countenances of these elderly but plucky gentlemen, and the way some of them got over the floor was really marvelous. They started off each dance with a vim and vigor that would have done credit to much younger men, and the new steps they occasionally introduced would be worth a fortune to the famous dancers of the age. But enjoy it they certainly did. Not one present was willing to admit that he was not having the time of his life, and they stayed right with it to the end. Even the next day, in spite of a tenderness about the lower joints and a sort of hesitating gait as they stepped around, they expressed themselves as feeling supremely happy over the good time they had had.

This was the last occasion in which the ordinary course of business of the Commercial club will be interfered with by any other attraction taking up their time, and henceforth nothing but cold blooded business will occupy the time each Thursday evening. The purpose for which this diversion was created was well served, and the members feel better for it.

Some of the members who were initiated into the latest manner of "tripping the light fantastic toe" were so enamored with the art that the services of Prof. Gregg have been secured for each Saturday evening, and any member desiring to learn this fascinating accomplishment is cordially invited to bring his wife or best girl and participate in the fun.

over \$400,000; The Home Oil Co., was started with \$45 cash capital and only ten acres of land. Its stock advanced from \$10 to \$5,000 per share and the company has paid as high as \$10,000 a month in dividends or at the rate of 12,000 per cent on the original price of the stock. Richard Ellis a young man from Bradford, Pa., bought ten shares of stock in this company for \$100 and in a few months sold it for \$31,620. The Sunset Oil Co., with an investment of \$50,000 is earning net profits of \$200,000 a year. The Salem Oil Co., has made over \$1,200 a share for its stock holders. The San Francisco Petroleum Co., has paid over \$27,000,000 in dividends and the Pacific Coast Oil Co., over \$15,000,000 and many others have paid large amounts.

**In Business for Himself**

Harry C. Hunter has resigned his position at the Portland Manufacturing plant in this city, and is now engaged in business for himself. He is now wholesale dealer in box stock and veneers, with real estate and timber lands as a side issue. Harry is a good genial fellow and will no doubt succeed well in whatever business he undertakes. May prosperity and good luck attend him in his new venture.

Bert Olen has just moved into his new residence on Myers street.