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The Spider and the Fly

The following clipped from Monday's Journal, a mouthpiece for the interests in Portland desirous of having St. Johns annex with that city, reminds one strongly of that school day rhyme, "The Spider and the Fly." The glittering promises of the spider in order to get the fly into the web are quite similar. The caption reads: Would Enjoy Better Improvements; Majority of Voters Favor Plan:

"Petitions bearing more than 300 signatures of residents of St. Johns, praying for annexation to Portland, are to be presented to the city council today or tomorrow. Three petitions have been passed among the people of the suburb and the people expressed general favor at the proposed change. The movement to annex St. Johns is being led by A. T. Boldon, P. T. Hanson, Charles Anderson (Socialist) and Judge Fletcher.

Behind the movement for annexation is a strong public interest in better streets, better water and more of it, free mail delivery and dock improvement. It is urged that no other community of equal importance in the state has less modern improvement and poorer mail service.

The town has spent $60,000 for public docks, but money is not available to build tracks and connections on the shore. The cost of this improvement is estimated at nearly $100,000. Free mail delivery has been a dream of the enterprising residents for a long time, but its realization has been postponed from year to year.

Perhaps the strongest force behind the annexation movement is the demand for more water. The fire demonstrated the uselessness of the water system in case of emergency and it is hoped by many of the people to get Bull Run water within the coming year.

The petitions which will go to the city council ask that a special election be called at an early date to allow the people interested in the matter to express their desires."

Those 300 petitions will be found to be woefully short, if the Journal would take time to look the matter up. The men at the head of the movement are so well known that it would be useless to enlarge on their virtues and the great boosting they have done for St. Johns in the past. "By their fruit ye shall know them."

Here is the glittering promise: "Better streets, better water and more of it, free mail delivery and dock improvement." But the Journal could not overlook a usual little knock even when inviting us to come in. Here it is: "No other community of equal importance in the state has less modern improvement."

Let us for a few minutes look into the matter. "Better streets." Sure we would get them by annexing with Portland. Just look at the better streets in University Park and Portsmouth, and these two places had a population of 4700 when St. Johns had 300. It is estimated that St. Johns has spent $27.-00 to every $1.00 spent in these two places combined in the past five years in the way of street improvement. There is not a street in St Johns that would not be improved provided the property owners agree to pay for same. The council is ready and willing at all times to take up any and all streets in St. Johns, enlarge the engineering corps and push them through as expeditiously as possible, provided the property owners guarantee payment of same. The only reason why more streets are not being improved is because the assessed valuation of the property will not stand for it, and the property owners refuse or neglect to sign waivers to take care of the excess. Even as it is we have been improving TEN streets or more to every one that has been improved in University Park and other Portland suburban towns. Oh, yes, we would get better streets by going into Portland—in the pig's eye.

"Better water and more of it." Wouldn't that scald you? Bull Run water is not to be mentioned in the same breath with St. Johns water. Surely water that is filtered through the sands hundreds of feet below the surface of the ground is infinitely better than surface water like Bull Run. Water that is piped miles and miles is not as good, cannot be as good, as water secured at the fountain head. "More of it." Let the people of Sellwood and other towns in Portland testify to what they have been getting this summer, and tell how they stormed the city hall to get enough water to cool a parched tongue. Then ask any citizen in St. Johns if he could not at all times secure all the water he wanted. Any one who would vote for annexation because he wants Bull Run water had best move to Portland at once, because as we explain in another article, it will be impossible to secure Bull Run water for years to come.

"Free mail delivery." Possibly, but it would be only one delivery per day. This is all Uncle Sam allows in suburban towns.

"Dock improvement." Any time we want sidetracks to the city dock we can get them without the aid of Portland or any other community. All we have to do is to call a special election to authorize issuing of bonds for that purpose, and then if we want sidetracks all that is necessary is to vote that way.

No, better arguments will have to be produced than the foregoing to induce the people of St. Johns to vote for annexation with Portland. The lure of being in a large city has been disastrous to too many small cities for us to swallow this sugar-coated pill.

Nothing to be Gained

A number of individuals imagine that by annexation to Portland Bull Run water and lower rates will at once be obtained in St. Johns. This is utterly impossible. The franchise of the St. Johns Water Co. will hold good for 18 years or more, whether St. Johns is annexed, or whether it is not. All the franchises given by the city council at various times cannot be repudiated unless the provisions are violated by the parties holding same. This is conceded by all who have any knowledge of matters of this kind. That being true, the St. Johns Water Co. can charge the same price as at present, or higher, for that matter, in spite of annexation, and what is more it is doubtful if they could be compelled to lay any more pipe at their own expense. Some will say that as soon as annexation takes place the city of Portland will issue bonds for the purchase of the water works. When one considers the enormous indebtedness of the city of Portland, and realizes that the water department there has been running behind for years and years, making appropriations necessary from time to time, voting bonds frequently to keep it going at all, it can readily be seen how willingly the people of Portland would vote additional bonds to the extent of $150,000 or more to purchase a water system for St. Johns—a city that Portland is jealous of, and every industry we get or improvement that has been made is begrudged. Some say that if the St. Johns Water Co. would not sell at a very low price Portland would run out lines of its own and supply us with Bull Run water. When it is known that all property owners would have to pay for laying the new pipes in front of their properties, the picture is not so pleasing to those who have bonded to the limit for street improvement and would necessarily have to pay cash for laying the new pipe. As to the rates, how long will it be before Portland raises her rates? It cannot always furnish water at a loss, as it seems to be doing at the present time. A handsome profit should be realized each year from the water service in Portland at the present prices, when the number of consumers is taken into consideration, but it is a notorious fact that if bonds were not frequently issued it would have gone into bankruptcy long ago. Where the money goes is a question. Too many high salaries and employes getting a pull out of it. Judging from Sellwood, Mount Scott and other places that have been annexed to Portland, if St. Johns were annexed the same company would continue to do business in St. Johns at the same old price. If it could be otherwise, would it not be well to get a guarantee from the city of Portland to that effect before annexing? Why not be assured of something before taking the jump? We would be going into Portland with practically no indebtedness, because the city dock is worth as much or more than all our indebtedness combined. Let us be assured of something in return for our aid in reducing and maintaining Portland's indebtedness of 24 millions before we even give the matter serious thought.

The postoffice has undergone considerable changes the past week. The style has been changed to a V shape, the general delivery and money order windows being in front as one enters the building, while the mail boxes are on both sides of the room instead of one side as heretofore. The change makes it more convenient for the general public as well as for the P. M. and deputy. The postoffice was closed all day Sunday while the change was taking place.

Work for a Greater St. Johns.

A Few "Annex" Thoughts

Our taxes would be higher because they are lower now than in the city of Portland.

America fought and bled for independence. Shall we give our independence up without a struggle?

Some of our arc lights would go out because we now have more than the city allows in her surburban towns. The other districts would raise a mighty howl if we were allowed to keep what we now have.

What would become of the city dock after annexation? is a question that is being raised. Judging from Portland's past record, it would be turned over to the O. R. & N. This company now possesses all the really good things in that city.

Our city charter would become null and the liquor question would again revert to the last district election, making the city dry until another election could be held, in the event of annexation. Then if it should result in the wets winning, a saloon could be placed on every corner without the present rigid restrictions invoked by the city of St. Johns, which would mean gambling hells and back rootas, bawdy houses and the like.

Portland's indebtedness is about $24,000,000 or $100 for every man, woman and child. According to population, St. Johns' indebtedness should be $500,000 to be on equal terms. Instead of that our indebtedness is more than covered by our assets—the city dock and city hall both being worth more than double what they have cost the city. Why not get our half million dollars' worth before thinking of annexing? A couple public parks, sidetrack to the dock, free ferry and other things might well first be secured.

It would be very pleasant (?) to be the fag end of a large city. How would we know what action was taken by the city council of Portland on any matter brought before it from St. Johns—if it were possible to get it before council? The council proceedings are never published. If we wanted a street improved we would have to take our turn with the other suburbs. There are said to be petitions with the Portland council for street improvement fron University Park of five years' standing, which gives a vivid idea of when we would get ours.

Locates Near Linnton

With the purchase of 1500 feet frontage one mile below Linnton, S. Ban, a local Japanese capitalist, has taken the first important step toward establishing one of the largest lumber and furniture plants on the Pacific Coast. Negotiations for the purchase of the frontage has been pending for some time. The transfer of the property, consisting of 12 acres, was made yesterday, the consideration being $14000.

Mr. Ban and associates plan to build two sawmills, one for preparing the hardwood material for the manufacture of furniture and the other for turning out Oregon fir for the export trade. The last named plant will have a 10-hour capacity of 100,000 feet for the present, but it will be so built to permit enlargement if business so justifies the increase in the output.

The furniture factory, it is announced, will be most modern in every way, and it is planned to make the product the equal of any manufactured in the East. The hardwood material will be shipped in from Japan and Siberia as ships' ballast. This will consist chiefly of Japanese oak and Siberian mahogany.

Work on the dock at Armona will be started at once, and it is expected that progress on the plant will be well forward by the first of the year. Mr. Ban is now on his way to San Francisco to complete plans for the enterprise.—Oregonian.

S. W. Rogers brought an apple into the office the other day that is a decided beauty. It measured 13½ inches in circumference, and is not fully matured. He states that it was taken from a tree five years old and that there are fully one hundred more of about the same size on the same tree. The variety is uncertain, but its size and beauty is not.

Pay your subscription.

Council Proceedings

Discussion of the proposed franchise of the Portland Railway, Light & Power Co. over Fessenden and Jersey streets occupied much time at the city council Tuesday night. Attorney Hampson, representing the company, made several points clear that the dads were somewhat uncertain about. He stated that the company was utterly unable to find anything in their records whereby an agreement was made with P. T. Smith insuring a five cent fare from St. Johns to Portland, but stated that it was not the intention, nor had it been, of the company to raise the fare at this time or in the future. Letters from the officials, which were placed on file, bore out this contention. He said the company realized that if the fare was raised to ten cents it would force St. Johns to annex to Portland, and the law provides that in cities of 50,000 or more inhabitants the fare cannot be more than five cents; therefore a ten cent fare would in all probability be very short lived. The reason the company was unwilling to bind themselves to a five cent fare in the franchise, he said, was because it would establish a rate for a certain distance which could be used against them in other districts more sparcely settled than the St. Johns district. Councilman Downey objected to the franchise on the ground that it was giving the company a franchise too cheap, which was the only objection raised. Upon vote for final passage all voted in the affirmative with the exception of Downey and Dobie. The mayor then declared the measure carried. And thus the last obstacle in the way of the improvement of Fessenden street has been removed and a continued five cent fare to Portland is assured.

Bids were then opened for the improvement of Portland boulevard from the east line of Point View addition to Fairhaven street. There were two, the first being presented by Kilkenny Bros. and read: Cut 38c, fill 18c, sidewalk and curb $1.04, crosswalks and box gutters 45c. The St. Johns Sand and Gravel Co. presented the other bid, reading as follows: Cut 40c, sidewalk and curb $1.02, crosswalks and box gutters 50c. The bids were referred to the city engineer with the recommendation that the lowest bid receive the contract provided it was below the engineer's estimate.

Mayor Hendricks, suffering from a severe cold, then asked to be excused and President of the Council Davis took the chair.

The attorney was instructed to prepare a resolution for the improvement of Fessenden street for adoption next week.

A petition for an arc light at the intersection of Smith and Fessenden streets was granted.

Bills to the amount of $42.33 were allowed.

A resolution to improve Mohawk street, Ivanhoe to Willamette boulevard, was adopted.

Proposals for sewer construction, District No. 3, was ordered readvertised.

Bury the Croaker

"Bury the croaker out in the woods in a beautiful hole in the ground, where the woodpecker pecks and the bumblebee bums and the straddle bug straddles around. He is no good to city push—too unpractical, stingy and dead, but he wants the whole earth and all of its crust and the stars that shine overhead. Then hustle him off to the bumblebee's roost, and bury him deep in the ground; he's no use here, get him out of the way, and make way for the man that is sound."

"How does central Oregon look?" asked an inquisitive person of a man who had spent five weeks down in the railroadless area. And the individual was honest in his quest for information. Yet no one would assume to ask a man how Ohio looked to him, even if he should spend a year in that state. That's where Oregon fools the best of them, for Ohio could be dropped into central Oregon without touching a railroad or a city of any size, and space enough would be left to place half a dozen of the New England states with their teeming millions of people. When people speak of magnificent distances they must be thinking of central Oregon.—Journal.

Your sole unfailing friend is money. M-O-N-E-Y, with a big, big M. Save some. Begin today. The First National Bank pays you 3 percent and helps you, too, compounding interest every six months.

Big Circus at Portland

Announcement is made that on Thursday and Friday, August 25 and 26, the Barnum and Bailey greatest show on earth will visit Portland.

This is the best news of the day to those who are fond of the circus form of amusement. For fifty-five years this has been the leading show of the world. This year it comes forth with an entire new equipment which cost the management $3,500,000.

The main performance is given in three rings, on two stages, on an immense Roman race track and in the dome. The climax of the program is the appalling performance of Desperado, a mad Frenchman, who leaps from the dome of the tent and lands on his bare chest. Additional thrills are given by Jupiter, a pure-white Arabian horse. It rides to the dome of the tent in a balloon and descends amid a Niagara of exploding rockets and fireworks. Then there is Charlie the First, beyond all question the most remarkable animal that ever came to the notice of scientists. Charlie the First is merely a chimpanzee, but he has become the greatest bicycle rider and acrobat in the world. He does an act on one of the stages that is the wonder of the age.

In the managerie is found the most remarkable zoological exhibit ever seen outside of the interior of the African jungle. It is Bumbino, the first and only baby giraffe ever born or exhibited in America. Only once before in history has the stock visited the giraffe pen of a captive zoo of animals. That event happened over fifty years ago in London, England. The youngster died before it could be placed on exhibition. Bumbino is only three feet tall, less than one-seventh of its mother's height. The youngster is worth its weight in gold.

On the list of performers are the name of 400 of the world's most talented performers. The new parade is a marvel of interest. It is a panorama of a thousand wonders. There are three miles of it. Here is an opportunity for the people of St. Johns and vicinity to see the greatest circus ever organized.

A Golden Opportunity

No married man with a little "get up" in him need be without a home in St. Johns. Elsewhere in the Review may be found the intelligence that any one having $150 can get a lot and have a house erected thereon according to his own ideas. The balance may be paid same as rent at five percent interest. In St. Johns no man need be out of work unless incapacitated, and by practicing a little economy can save $150 in a short time, so that there is no reason whatever that he should not avail himself of such a golden opportunity. In a city with the future this one has, no man can go wrong in securing a home on these terms, no matter where in the city same may be located. Young men now paying rent should not allow this chance to slip by.

There's such an awful lot of murders, there's such an endless stream of wrong, they're killing husbands by the hundreds, and suiciding by the throng. The wives are quick dispatched in Europe, or buried in the chilling lake: the list is growing more appalling—we're finding roaches in the cake. The dogs are now electrocuted, and babies die upon the street; the cats are soused beneath the water, lightning bugs succumb to heat. There's slaughter at the stock yards daily, the chutes are dyed a lurid red, the fly is being swatted, and the bed-bug's murdered in his bed.—Exchange.

An agitation is on foot to organize a stock company for the purpose of erecting an opera house in St. Johns. The movement has not assumed any great proportions so far, but it is hoped that the project will become a fact. Such an institution would be hailed with pleasure here, as many of our people are anxious to witness good plays and it makes a very tiresome trip to go to Portland to do so. Two or three plays a week would be sufficient to start with, and we believe they would be patronized to such an extent that an opera house would prove a paying proposition right at the start.

You work hard to get them. Keep them by putting dollars in the First National Bank. They earn 3 per cent, compound interest. rt

A Man Above Reproach

The announcement of Hon. K. C. Couch as a candidate for reelection to the Legislature may be found in this issue. Mr. Couch is a man who firmly believes that the people should rule, that they are greater and of more moment than any clique, machine or faction. He is fearless, upright and dependable. His record during the past two years is clean and commendable. He is a man who dares to do the right and upon whom bribery and cajolery have no effect. Thoroughly familiar with the wants and requirements of this section, he is a man who may be depended upon to use his best efforts to secure the same. A bold and ready speaker, he will at all times enforce to the best of his ability any measure that is desired to be brought before the Legislature, if it is right and he believes it to be to the best interests of his constituents. A free ferry at St. Johns is one of the things that Mr. Couch may be depended upon to secure if he has the proper assistance from the people of St. Johns. A pioneer business man of St. Johns, with his interests here, popular and highly respected by all who know the man, courageous, and having served as a member of the last Legislature, he is eminent-fitted to again serve the people of this district. If one were to search the entire peninsula a more capable and more worthy man for this office could not be found. It is so difficult to elect good, clean honest men to the Legislature, that this opportunity should not be neglected.

Fire in the North End

A fire that indicated incendiary origin occurred in St. Johns early Monday morning. It was the residence was owned by a Mr. Walton and occupied by K. W. Majeske, near the school building in the North End. Mr. Majeske and family were away from home Sunday and returning home late in the evening, they retired without building a fire. About 3:30 in the morning they were awakened by the crackling made by the flames and had barely time to get out of the house and secure a few effects as they ran. There was a good sized wood shed and chicken yard at the rear of the house, where the fire in some manner originated, and may have been caused by a chicken thief dropping a lighted match. The loss is about $1000 and is a severe one to the owners, as no insurance whatever was carried on either the house or the furniture. The flames had gained such headway before the alarm was turned in that the fire department, which made their usual good time in arriving at the scene, could do nothing towards staying the conflagration, other than to confine it to the one building.

An Open Challenge

In order to find out what arguments those desiring to annex with Portland possess (if any) we challenge any supporter of the measure to a newspaper debate on the following resolutions, one to be taken up each week, and we taking the negative in each instance. Now is the time to produce good, sensible argument. Hot air and bluster will not win votes. As to the judges, the people can render a decision at the polls:

Resolved, That by annexation St. Johns would get better streets, or more public improvements.

Resolved, That by annexation St. Johns would get better water and more of it.

Resolved, That by annexation St. Johns would get more industries

Resolved, That annexation would increase the price of realty in St. Johns.

A city park is one of the things badly needed by St. Johns. Such a place would give all a chance to spend a few pleasant hours every Sunday or any other day. Columbia Park near University draws many St. Johns people thither who would much rather stay here if there was a place to go. One thing is sure, if we do not secure a public park before annexation takes place, we will never get one afterward. Columbia Park would then have to do for the entire lower Peninsula. There is suitable ground between the loop of the car track that could no doubt be secured for this purpose, and it is as cheap now as it ever will be.

Preach the gospel of St. Johns.

Fessenden Street

The last obstacle in the way of the improvement of Fessenden street, provided the property stands for the improvement, was removed by council Tuesday night when the franchise giving the Portland Railway, Light & Power Co. the right to operate their cars over the street was granted. Next week a resolution declaring the council's intention to improve this street will be presented. Fessenden street is now to all intents and purposes a 70 foot street. As it is impossible to hard surface the thoroughfare this year, and as it is best that the ground be given some time to settle before hard surfacing, only the grading and cement sidewalking will be accomplished this fall. Unless no unforseen obstacle arises dirt will be flying on Fessenden in six weeks. This street has caused more discussion than all the other streets of St. Johns combined, and it will be welcome news to all to know that everything is now settled and work upon its improvement will soon be under way.

Mr. Voter, Register

It seems that a number of our citizens have gotten it into their heads that because they have registered once this year it is not necessary to do so again. This is a sad mistake, however. It is just as vitally essential to register now as it was in the spring. It is one of the handicaps for the privilege of living in this good old state of Oregon. So if you want to vote this fall without going to the trouble to call in all your friends and neighbors to testify to your pedigree at the polls, visit the recorder's office and if it is not inconvenient, take a couple of your friends along, because each voter that registers needs the signatures of two witnesses having knowledge of his residence and of the fact that he is a resident of St. Johns. In a couple of weeks or so this opportunity will be taken away. Procrastination is the thief of time, so do it now. Delays are dangerous and it is of no avail to kick after it is too late. Register.

Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Williams were over Sunday visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Ogden near Dayton, Ore. Mr. Williams gives glowing accounts of Howard's prowess as a granger. That his ranch is in A1 apple-pie order, that he is himself hale, hearty and rugged as the hills, that he has transformed the fungus covered, scale defiled, worm-eaten, brush heap of an orchard which he purchased two years ago into a clean limbed, well pruned, vigorous, thrifty bunch of trees, loaded to the limit with the finest of fruit; a thing of beauty and a joy to all beholders. Our hat is off to Howard, and while it is off we will just hold it out for one of those big red apples. Come through with the apple, Brother Ogden, or we may be constrained to visit the orchard, a calamity to be dreaded next to the codlin moth.

Dr. Vinton Scott and John Noce returned the first of the week from a delightful outing at Long Beach. They had a most pleasant time fishing, digging clams and catching crabs. As trophies of their skill they presented ye editor with a large fish and several nice fat crabs all ready for the inner man to take care of. Therefore, we can offer no objection to their taking another trip to the same place this summer.

Prof. H. C. Solberg of Brookings, S. D., spent a few days with his old time chum, John Peterson, the past week. For 23 years Mr. Solberg has been professor of the agricultural college of that place. Like all visitors to St. Johns, he is greatly pleased with this hustling city, and the signs of activity on every side looks very promising.

The Princess Vaudeville Theatre is presenting some very interesting attractions these evenings. Patronage is increasing at a steady rate and all are well pleased with the entertainments provided. The Newsboy Actor made quite a hit last week. As a dancer he has few superiors.

Dr. and Mrs. Hartel returned Tuesday, Aug. 23, from their Canadian trip. They report a very pleasant time visiting their old friends and relatives across the border, taking in Vancouver, Victoria and other cities in the Canute country.