

The New Age

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Oregon Telephone North 1376.

Entered at the postoffice at Portland, Oregon,
as second class matter.

SUBSCRIPTION.
One Year, Payable in Advance \$2.00

Established 1896. Published at 240 1/2 Stark St.
Third Floor.

NEGROES IN BUSINESS.

That the Negro is a success in business is a fact that needed no particular demonstration at the hands of the National Negro Business League, but the impressive exhibit made at the recent convention of that notable body served to emphasize that fact. Evidences of his success in industrial and commercial fields are visible on every hand, in the North as well as in the South.

In the North, where the measure of opportunity has been larger and where the "race problem" does not invite popular solicitude or controversy, the Negro has successfully invaded almost every department of business endeavor. Every community has its share of prosperous, intelligent and thrifty Negro business men. In agriculture he has achieved notable success. In some of the farming districts of the North it is not uncommon to see him driving the finest teams and equipments to the nearby towns and where his individual holdings amount in many instances to several hundred acres of rich farm lands.

While the ability of the Negro to conduct successfully a business enterprise of any character has been demonstrated in numberless instances since the days of slavery there is real need of such an organization as the National Negro Business League to inspire men of our race with courage and ambition and to disseminate widely "the gospel of usefulness." This is the gospel that Booker T. Washington has been preaching for years, and which he has practically exemplified in the founding of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, a most remarkable monument to the genius, pluck and administrative ability of a progressive member of the Negro race. This doctrine of usefulness was the keynote utterance of his address in opening the second annual convention of the League in Chicago recently. He said: The object lesson of one honest Negro succeeding magnificently in each community in some business or industry is worth a hundred abstract speeches in securing opportunities for the race.

All the flapping of the politicians and the studied homilies of the scholars and sociologists will not present so good a solution of the "race problem" as this.

DOUBTFUL NEUTRALITY.

One item in the recently published statistics of the commerce of the year, as compiled by the Treasury Department, has been deemed of such interest that it has been repeated again and again by the press, the country over. This item shows that American citizens have sold to Great Britain over \$5,000,000 worth of horses and mules for its use in "pacifying" and "civilizing" and "Christianizing" the South African Republics. Of course this is a republic itself and its people quite generally sympathize with the Boers; but British government is able to pay handsomely for the horses and mules—and business is business. Moreover, the animals would have been bought somewhere else if not in America.

But the incident suggests several things besides the professed sympathy of Americans and the profit on their mules. For one nation, when at war with another, to buy of the citizens of a neutral nation horses and mules with which to haul cannon is not so very different from buying ships in which to carry them. Great Britain permitted some of her enterprising shipbuilding citizens to sell the Alabama to the Confederacy, and Great Britain paid a big money penalty for doing so, after the civil war was over.

It is something new in international law that a neutral government may permit its subjects to sell contrabands of war, so long as those subjects take the risk that the contraband articles may be captured. The Alabama was captured, or, rather, destroyed, but Great Britain paid the Geneva award notwithstanding; and in the present case the claim becomes ridiculous, even if it were good law, because the Boers have no navy whatever.

Americans with horses and mules to sell have done a profitable business during the year, and the government has not interfered; neither is it likely to be called upon at a later date to settle; but it is a question of rather more than academic importance as to what would happen if the same sort of traffic should be attempted when Great Britain is at war with such a nation as Germany, for example.

Selling for use against the Boers is plainly different. That is, there is a great difference in the likelihood of the United States being brought up with a round turn. And yet it is hard to see how it is exactly right. Perhaps the doubt accounts for the wide-spread interest in the five million dollar mule item in the Secretary of the Treasury's report.

CONSUMERS PAY THE TAX.

It's remarkable with what unconcern an argument, forced to sustain certain conditions, can be abandoned and the truth be admitted when there is simply a change in the location of conditions. It is not very long ago when the political campaigns were fought in this country with the tariff as the principal issue. The advocates of the high protective policy, exemplified in the McKinley bill and the still more extreme Dingley bill insisted that "the foreigner pays the tax." Although force and logic showed it to be otherwise, they ignored both and continued to shout that bold assertion more boldly than ever.

Since those days a monetary question has commanded the attention of the public as a chief political issue during the heat of campaigns, and unusual industrial conditions have given the tariff problem a respite from agitation, although the customs duties have been as indefensible as ever. No agency was more prominent in the repeated declaration that "the foreigner pays the tax, during the days of tariff agitation than the Boston Journal. But now that Germany is reported as seriously considering the adoption of a protective tariff that contemplates a prohibition of certain American exports, the Journal argues thus inconsistently:

"As we remarked the other day, the proposed new German tariff will hurt Germany more than it will hurt us. The things on which the German government proposes to put high duties are things which the German population has got to have and cannot produce for itself. It follows that, while agricultural imports from the United States may suffer some shrinkage because of the increased rates, the worst loss will fall upon the German people, who will have to pay higher prices for food."

Of course, this is in accordance with fact, and it is no less a fact that the American consumers are paying a higher price for tariff-protected products because of the Dingley law. If these products are such as are not produced here, but nevertheless bear a custom's duty, the consumer pays a higher price than he otherwise would, simply because that tax is imposed. If Germany wishes to place such an imposition upon her people, it can be learned from the experience had here that high tariff will do it.

INDUSTRIAL ECONOMY.

A glad period of each year in Oregon comes with the hop-picking season. It is the "poor family's time," in more ways than one. It is a period in which the person pinched a little by poverty may combine pleasure with profitable employment. It is the time when the overtaxed mother may go into the vineyard with his blithesome brood and enjoy her annual outing, during the pleasure of which she finds profit in enjoyable labor. It is the period of the year to which she looks forward as the season in which she may earn means with which to buy an extra gown for herself and autumn toggery for her children. School books, too, are a necessity—and thus many of them are obtained without appeal either to private or public charity.

Thousands of people go to the hop-fields from Portland every year. The opportunity represents much to them. Quite generally they are people who cannot afford to lose time in pleasure in which there is no profit. They make it, therefore, a season of recreation, its enjoyment being increased by the gain they make financially.

There is hygienic virtue in the work of picking hops. The atmosphere of the hop-field is surcharged with the elements of health-giving odor. The change from the routine of housework is respite from the tedium of daily life. It is work and play at the same time.

At least \$50,000 are thus earned by families of Portland each year. Out of that amount many school children are outfitted for their winter's tuition, many a larder is replenished and many a household receives substance of added comfort.

Hop-picking season is indeed a source of much economy and recreation, much pleasure and much profit.

MONEY IN ALFALFA CROPS.

Nebraska Farmers Growing It with Success on Lands Once Abandoned.

Nebraska is likely to be known hereafter as the land of alfalfa. It has only been within the last half-dozen years that the farmers of the West have found out what a gold mine alfalfa is. The Eastern farmer has not made this discovery yet.

Eight or ten years ago the idea became deep-rooted that every part of Nebraska was capable of being redeemed from the range and made to blossom with the seductiveness of the rose. Two years of drought changed this notion and drove thousands Eastward again. Part of the thousands of acres of land thus abandoned to the gopher and the coyote was immediately fenced in by the ranchers and the cattlemen, but the men who hung on and the men who put their trust in cattle soon found that where corn would not grow there was the land best suited to the cultivation of a forage plant once despised.

This was alfalfa. Year after year since then has found hundreds of additional acres planted to this forage, until there are now in the valleys of the Platte and the Republican and even here and there in the sandhills great farms of a quarter and a half section upon which no other crop than this is raised. With alfalfa as a starter and corn as a finisher the best method of fattening cattle for market has been found by the stockman.

Three crops a year, sometimes four, are raised. The average yield is from two to two and a half tons to the acre at each cutting, and sometimes goes as high as six, while it commands a price ranging from \$4 to \$6 a ton. Besides this it can be raised each year with certainty for an indefinite term of years. It does not exhaust the soil, because it contains a very small proportion of phosphates; in fact, experiments have shown it to be an excellent thing for the ground. It derives a great deal of its moisture from the atmosphere, and in some way exerts a disintegrating effect upon the alkalis of the soil—the very qualities that make the corn yield scanty.

It grows dense and scarcely above two feet in height. Fed green or cured to stock it is wonderfully nutritious. It is cut when coming into bloom, while it is succulent, and before the stems become woody.

THE LAZIEST CREATURES.

Indolent Aquatic Fowl Are Found on Shores of Western Lakes.

"During the recent trip through the lower western section of the country," said a young man who had recently returned to New Orleans, "I believe I discovered the laziest and most stupid form of life to be found anywhere on the globe. It was an aquatic fowl, with a big, clumsy-looking beak, in form something like the dodo, now extinct. I have spent some time in watching this fowl, which is found in some of the shallow lakes, and the chief point of interest to me was the startling stupidity displayed. They call them shags, I believe, out west. They generally squat on stumps or logs in the lake and watch for the smaller fish that play around the surface of the water. They are fairly clever in catching what they want, and they throw out their bills with considerable precision when they dig for game, and they never get to eat what they catch until they have fed at least one and maybe more than one member of another kind of water fowl. Whenever a shag begins to catch fish a long-legged water hen will take a place immediately behind him. When the shag lands the fish the water hen simply reaches over and gets it. Without any show of resentment and without turning around the shag will continue its watch for fish and this is kept up until the water hen has finished its meal, and then, if no other enterprising member of the same tribe comes along, the shag is permitted to enjoy the product of its own sleepy efforts. I have, on one occasion, seen one shag feed as many as three water hens before eating a single fish. It is certainly a singular display of stupidity, and after having watched the performance a number of times I am convinced that the shag is actually too dull to even know that the water hen stands behind him to steal the fish out of his mouth."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Wool from Limestone. "An Indian chemist," says the Pharmaceutical Era, "has applied for patents on a process of making wool from limestone. After some sort of chemical treatment the rock is subjected to a drawing-out process, by which, it is said, it is converted into the finest and most pliable wool, of beautiful white color, soft as down and both water and fire proof."

Insurance and Hair Dye. Hair dye is considered so detrimental to long life that a continental assurance company refuses to insure the lives of persons using it.

Cents and Nickels in Demand. According to United States Treasurer Roberts, cents and nickels are now being used to a much greater extent than ever before.

LONDON'S ROMAN BATH.

Two Thousand Years Old and Has Been in Constant Use.

London, England, has a remarkable cold water plunge bath which is a reminder of ancient times, when the Romans held sway. It is to-day just what it was 2,000 years ago when London was but a name. Situated in a narrow court known as Strand-lane, opposite the church of St. Mary-le-Strand, it is naturally a great object of interest to the traveler. The remarkable thing about it is that it has been in constant use from the time of the Romans down to to-day. An amazing fact is that so



LONDON'S ROMAN BATH.

far back as any records can be found the supply of water has never ceased. The only change noticed in recent times occurred some time ago, when extensive building operations were going on in the neighborhood, and for a time the water came through a dark color. This lasted for some three months and then the flow became clear again. The water comes in through the old Roman brickwork in several places, particularly under the stone steps leading down into the bath, and it is curious that although the supply varies from time to time, it is usually greater in dry weather than in wet. This flow of water has never been traced to its source, but some have declared that the spring rises in Hampstead and reaches the bath by a subterranean stream. Of this, however, there seems no evidence.



A new and illustrated edition of "A Short History of the English People," by John Richard Green, edited by Mrs. J. R. Green and Miss Kate Norgate, has been published.

An important work on Balzac is soon to be issued in France. It will give the history of Balzac's youth, from 1825 to 1828, when the great author carried on business as a printer and type-founder.

An important work on Spain, "The Spanish People," is just issued as the first volume of a "Great Peoples" series. It is the work of Dr. Martin A. S. Hume, who relates the story of the revolution of the Spanish people from a new point of view.

The Norwegian poet, Bjornstjerne Bjornson, has just finished a new drama, "Laboremus," on which he has been at work for several years. It will be published by the Danish firm which prints the works of Ibsen, Lie, Strindberg, Drachman and Georg Brandes.

Douglas Sladen's new novel, "My Son Richard; or, The Great Company," will give an intimate sketch of Thames summer life, and deals with the subject which is uppermost in nearly every Englishman's mind—the changes in home life made by the rush of young men into the army.

A woman who has made a study of the subject, finds that the Bible retains its ancient place of honor in old-fashioned households, and that a gorgeous cook book, equal to a volume of the encyclopedia in size, queens it in worldly houses. Sometimes, in addition to the thin little magazines of the early seventies, there is other paper covered literature. This is generally on the lower shelf of the table. Battered copies of "The Woman in White," "The Duchess" and the like are seen on the guest room table—all of these were seen in houses where the library showed no lighter modern literature than Mrs. Humphry Ward.

Selling Hot Meals. One aspect of the food problem has assuredly been solved by a company in New Haven, Conn., which undertakes to serve hot meals to all and sundry within a radius of seventy miles from its headquarters, and that from 25 per cent to 50 per cent cheaper than they can be obtained elsewhere. These meals are sent out in wagons with compartments for each article. The meals are placed in the different compartments smoking hot, and are kept at a high temperature until placed on the purchaser's table.

Tom—a Fragment. There was once a lad named Tom, Who bought him a dynamite bomb. "Just listen, you boys, And hear this for a noise— And now they're collecting young Tom."—Boston Journal.

A good many women wear high-heeled shoes who do not have a high-heeled appearance.

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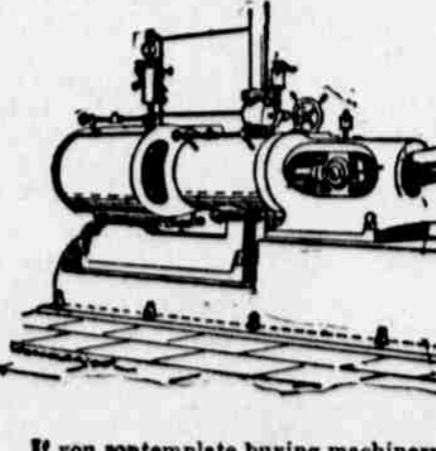
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