

The Oregonian

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Portland, Thursday, Jan. 19, 1905. THE LEGISLATURE AND THE "LOCAL OPTION" ACT.

It may be admitted that there is room for doubt, from the phrasing of the referendum amendment, whether the Legislature may amend or repeal an act which has become a law by a direct vote of the people...

A TAX ON PRUDENCE AND FORESIGHT. A bill has appeared in the Legislature to increase the tax upon life insurance companies...

WOMEN AND DOGS. A woman, a dog and a walnut tree—The more you beat them, the better they like. Progress is made when the dog is taught to fetch the stick...

GOOD NEWS FROM SUBSIDY BILL. A Washington dispatch says that it is practically a certainty that the shipping subsidy bill recommended by the Merchant Marine Commission will not become a law...

Collecting Bottles. The Gentlemen. Quite a number of collectors are appearing all about the city...

The Dismayed Senator. A senator in one of our famous colleges, with an eye to employment after graduation, recently called at the office of the Evening Post...

Here and There. (A reply to "There and Here.") In the East "hold on" means "wait." As the Western hand derives weather such as here abides...

Men, an American newspaper should be an American gentleman. To see the right is genius; to do it is courage. Unite the two under the banner of some idealism...

Grant's and Port Arthur Losses. Chicago Chronicle. The Chronicle acknowledges the receipt of a letter from Colonel George K. Dauchy, of Chicago, late commander of the Twelfth New York Battery...

On the Firing Line. For glory? For good? For fortune or fame? Why, for the front where the battle is on! Leave the rear to the dolt, the lazy, the lame...

amended with advantage, and it ought to be. It should be made an honest and fair local option act.

TARIFF REVISION. PORTLAND, Or., Jan. 17.—(The Editor.)—If our present tariff law requires revision, and the people are in favor of its revision, why don't the advocates of revision point out the goods and ready cash to be had from all portions of our country...

RAILROADS AND CONGRESS. President Roosevelt has made no secret of his purpose to get through, if possible, at this session of Congress, legislation to extend the power of the Interstate Commerce Commission...

RUSSIAN ACTIVITY IN TURKISTAN. Russian activity in Turkestan apparently shows no diminution during the war, for China is reported to have entered a protest against the occupation of the Kashgar and Karakoram regions...

THE EFFORT TO MAKE A POLITICAL MATTER OUT OF THE SWAYNE IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS has been successful only in part. The action of Representative Grosvenor in reading in the House the letter of Judge Pardee was strange...

MR. NIEDRINGHAUS, of Missouri, seems to have missed the United States Senate. He had the caucus nomination and a numerical majority of all votes cast in the separate houses Tuesday...

IT IS TO BE OBSERVED THAT THE INNOCENT pastime of keno is not to be included in the gambling felony bill presented to the House at Salem. There is an impression in certain quarters that playing keno is gambling, but gentlemen who are real gamblers and have had somewhat to do with the courts in Portland lately say it is not...

PRINCE SVIATOPOLK-MIRSKY has at last abandoned an office for which he was not strong enough. With a vacillating Czar, a clamorous Liberal element and a strong and hostile bureaucracy, the Minister of the Interior was helpless...

IT IS CLEAR THAT IF THE GAME WARDEN is to enforce the game laws he must have a corps of deputies in every county; and to maintain his deputies he must have funds. The tax of \$1 on hunters will probably raise a considerable amount...

AT THE REQUEST OF REPRESENTATIVE Humphrey, the Navy Department has reduced the dropcock charges at Puget Sound navy-yard one-half. It is self-evident that the Government enters into competition with the business of private concerns, and this action will hardly be appreciated by the owners of docks not built with Government money...

THE TACOMA PRESS COMPLAINS OF THE "innuendoes and erroneous statements of the Sweeney press, and denounces the 'paid' advertising of the Spokane millionaire candidate." From which we are to surmise that the entente cordiale between the red apple and the cork-screw has been slightly disturbed...

WITH THE DR. IRVINE-BISHOP TALBOT case in the civil courts, the every-day lawyer has a chance to show whether or not he can talk as much and accomplish as little as the ecclesiastical lawyer, who has hitherto had the floor...

PENNSYLVANIA, too, wants to come to the Lewis and Clark Fair, and will probably put up a large building out of a proposed appropriation of \$50,000.

amount of foreign tonnage to handle our increasing commerce with foreign countries at rates in line as to give the producer the largest possible returns for his capital and labor...

THE PRESIDENT also wishes to add to the numbers of the Commission and to have the salaries raised from \$5000 a year to \$10,000, in order to multiply the office to the highest class of men. To this the railroads have no objection...

THE URGENCY of this railroad question has for the present overshadowed tariff revision. The House committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce has the past week held hearings on the representatives of the railroads...

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As an unpleasant spectacle, nothing of late can compare with that of the doddering old Platt tremulously relating his octogenarian amours.

NOTE AND COMMENT. A Washington paper credits a clipping to "John Ruskin in the Kansas City Star."

Careful calculation shows that in the exchanges received by the Oregonian the messages of various Governors of states occupy paper enough to cover Multnomah County and leave enough to start all the kitchen fires in Portland for three months.

"Faux" up-to-date is making a great success in Japan, according to a Tokio letter. Mephistopheles is represented as a modern European, who betrays a Japanese girl. Later the girl is acquitted by a court and is married to a soldier just home from the war in Manchuria...

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STRANGE PEOPLES OF THE EARTH THE DYAKS

By arrangement with the Chicago Tribune.

NO people has borne a worse reputation for unmitigated and blood-thirsty savagery than the barbarous Dyaks of the Island of Borneo. This reputation does not seem to be wholly deserved. The Dyak is hospitable. He will divide his last bit of rice cake with the stranger. It is an insult to refuse to drink his native "tau" with him...

There are few details of savage life more interesting than those relating to marriage customs. When a Dyak young man fancies a young woman he shows it by persistently offering to do her work. If she accepts his aid he steals at night into the room where all his family are asleep on the floor together and wakes his sweetest. She may ask him to strike a light or stir the fire, or she may slink slyly off in the darkness to his own lodging, for such a request is a rejection of his suit...

Marriage follows close on the heels of betrothal. The formal ceremony varies slightly among different tribes of Dyaks. The commonest form is about as follows: Two bars of iron are placed in the middle of the village and the young people are led from opposite sides and seated on them. The priest hands each of them a betel nut and a cigar and waves two fowls over their heads. In a long-winded oration he invokes many blessings upon them. He ends by kissing their heads together three times. The bride then puts her betel nut in her own mouth and her cigar in the mouth of her groom. The groom puts his betel nut in his mouth and his cigar in the mouth of the bride, and they are declared man and wife. The fowls are now killed and the steaming of the wedded pair divined in the blood. The ceremony ends with a feast and a general drunk.

The Dyaks are among the most temperate of all the peoples of the world. Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, who has made the closest study of them, regards them as among the most intelligent. Like all savages, however, they are extremely conservative. They refused to chop wood with a European ax, and even sinned progressive tribesmen who did so, long after they had been convinced that the white man's implement was much better than the clumsy native one. They live mainly by agriculture, rice being their principal crop. The women do most of the work, and the men spend the greater part of their time in hunting and looting indoors, indulging in the universal habit of chewing betel nut.

S. O. D.

THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

Editor Harvey of Harper's Weekly Talks Well.

From an address on the 25th anniversary of the Chicago Press Club. "There is no press in the world comparable to that of America in freedom from influence, political or social, from reality, from commercialism, from kind whatsoever. In France, a newspaper's opinions are a matter of fact; in England, too often, of titles; in Germany, Austria and Spain, of imperial favor; in Russia, of the caprice of a government of a whole people by themselves, in absolute freedom of expression. Upon that all depends. Restrict it, or curtail the influence, and you stifle the mind, and you sow the wind."

Personally, I should be of the last to defend or make apology for this latest manifestation of commercialism in the American press. But, however seriously we may regret and resent the abolition, we cannot ignore the irresistible conclusion that this particular channel, and this alone, affords a vent for unexpressed beliefs and suspicions which can be dissipated only by the clear rays of reason following any form of expression.

As contrasted with our own country, Russia today stands forth a vivid example of the effect of suppressed opinion. Discontent with the government, and a continuous hissing of offensive gases escaping is not pleasant, but it is infinitely preferable to the otherwise inevitable explosion. Yet more important than this is the fact of the existence of a government of a whole people by themselves, in absolute freedom of expression. Upon that all depends. Restrict it, or curtail the influence, and you stifle the mind, and you sow the wind."

With this general dictum few if any would have its hardness to disagree. But it is often, and I regret to say, that the word "liberty" is perverted to license. Freedom of speech, freedom of publicity, yes; all admit the wisdom and necessity of preserving it. But how frequently is added a vigorous declamation against "unfair criticism," and how almost daily is uttered, sometimes a violent and unwarranted, sometimes a dignified and justifiable, protest against "invasion of privacy," "encroachment upon personal rights" and like offenses, certain of the virtuous avowals of shy and retiring, though weak and human beings of both sexes, in their own out of the most vociferous protest may be attributed safely to self-sufficiency, snobbishness or a guilty conscience.

There is so little of malice in American newspapers as to be unworthy of notice, but it is unquestionably true that too little heed is paid to the fact that unwelcome misrepresentation is often quite as serious in effect. Worst of all is the refusal to rectify a known error. Cursed be the man who initiated the policy of never making a retraction in the columns of his journal! The mere fact that an individual, whether right or wrong, is guilty of a voiceless and helpless in controversy, morally vest him with the right to exceptional consideration. It is once started, can never be stopped, but the one responsible for its circulation, directly or indirectly, who fails to exert every possible endeavor to that end is unworthy of association with decent men.

Go forward as ever the valiant have gone. Whether city or field, whether mountain or mine. Go forward, right on to the firing line. Go forward, right on to the firing line.

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