

The Oregonian

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Portland, Friday, April 7, 1905. A PITIFUL PLEA. The statement of the Standard Oil Company, through its chief solicitor, published today, is not an answer to the charges against it, but merely a plea in avoidance.

There has been attempt to justify and to sanctify every great wrong on this same ground. It is pleaded everywhere for oppressive prescription. To come down at once to an illustration right here at home, we find men who have seized the streets of this city for operation of car lines, for the use of which they pay nothing, have said nothing, yet claim a vested right, of indefinite extent.

Such transactions in themselves and in their results, are all immoral. They are on a level with the transactions of the slave trade; and the fortunes have the same basis.

The logic is this: "A while ago stealing was very general and we stole. We are entitled to credit for being the greater and more successful thieves."

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are the technical issues involved, that no law could cover the whole, and no commission acting under specific law, binding it to the principle of uniform rates, could do justice to the parties concerned. What President Hadley recommends is the creation of special railway courts with power to hear and to decide questions arising in different localities, upon their actual merits, to be ascertained from examination of the special conditions pertaining to each locality. What would be reasonable for each would thus be evolved; for it is certain that rates that would be reasonable in one section would not be reasonable in another.

CONTRACTORS AND THE PUBLIC. The public has recently been getting a vast amount of instructive information about the devious ways of contractors. Two partners fall out and fill the court records with damaging disclosures as to the Port of Portland drydock contracts.

These are the things that we know about some city contracts. How many things have been done that we do not know about and may never know? How long have these methods been in vogue? How extensive is the conspiracy to pluck the city at the expense of the complacent taxpayer?

It has always been so in Portland. The streets have been given away without remuneration of any kind to a street railway company that tears them up when it pleases and puts them down when and how it pleases.

What is going to be the end of it? It may be suspected that there will be an effort to amend the disclosure act in themselves and in the hands of the city government is in hands that really desire reform, and will, if it can, bring it about. The truth is unquestionably that these things have been going on always in Portland.

GOVERNMENT-MADE WATERWAYS. The Tacoma Ledger makes extended editorial comment on the docking of a large British bark at the foot of Fifteenth street. This is well up in the heart of the business district in that city, and the depth of water necessary to float so large a carrier is nearly twenty feet at low tide.

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some Government aid for our Portland waterways. The Ledger, which is so well pleased over the results attendant on the "expenditure of a large sum of money by the Federal Government in the improvement of the city waterways," should in future refrain from unkind comment whenever a request for appropriation is made by the Government for the Columbia River. The Federal appropriations for enlarging Tacoma harbor benefit no one but the property owners of the City of Destiny.

PAIDS IN EDUCATION. It is only by comparison that we come to know and appreciate our blessings. Take the public school system in Portland, for example, as administered by our educational authorities from year to year, and compare it with that of Greater New York, as shown in a report recently published.

The profits of the tobacco trust last year were \$22,228,152, and the institution is credited with a surplus of nearly \$30,000,000. Now that "trust-baiting" has become a favorite pastime, it might be a good plan to put the tobacco trust on the rack.

The Yaqui Indians are terrorizing the Mexicans and Texans again. A dispatch from El Paso states that a band of fifty of these renegades are murdering, pillaging and burning in the Sonora country, and that people are leaving their farms and plantations and going to the city for protection.

Why laugh because school children in New York are taught to make oyster stew. Without training few girls could succeed in producing a fairly good oyster stew without using oysters.

Members of the New York Motor Club have arranged a "veranda" day, when they will take the inmates of the orphan asylums out riding in 1900 autos. In view of this kindness, it would be invidious to say that those who make orphans ought to help them.

The biggest diamond in the world cost \$5 cents carriage from South Africa to the London jewellers. It was mailed as a registered parcel in the ordinary way and delivered at the London office with the morning's mail.

The New York Commercial says dolefully: The idea of March has come and went, her forceful winds are blown and spent, and April showers awake the flowers and bring the landlord for the rent.

Canada's credit. Canada is elated over her latest financial transaction. She has recently floated in London the first issue of Grand Trunk Pacific Railway bonds, guaranteed by the Dominion Government.

San Francisco's latest murder mystery has as its grime as a crime investigated by Poe, Gaborian or Doyle. It is regarded as an indication of the high standing of Canadian credit in the London market.

Henry James, after revisiting his native land, says that the American girl "lacks" distinction. His opinion will be divided by several impoverished noblemen.

Germany wants the open door in Morocco. So does France. But the Kaiser and Loubet are shoving from different sides of the door.

NOTE AND COMMENT. A New Yorker is charged with the larceny of a million dollars. We thought that was financing.

Suppose you read of a man walking quietly along a street and finding in a doorway a bundle which proved to be the headless and legless trunk of a still warm human body. Would not you feel that you had opened an Arabian Nights story and that the street must be one in mysterious Baghdad?

Ballons are racing across the English Channel, but the steamship companies continue building. "Traction is distraction in Chicago. If we were the Clair we'd be mighty chary about examining any Easter egg that came in the mail.

The effect of this upon a sensible jury must have been tremendous. However, we will not consider the pleasing aspect of the matter. What is most pleasing about this burst of eloquence is the doubt expressed concerning the presence of the devil on the trail.

A man finds a bleeding human body in a San Francisco doorway. A Portland man finds a baby on his doorstep. A Portland physician wishes to pay for his death-notice, preparatory to committing suicide.

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STUDY OF DISTRICT ATTORNEY JEROME. Character of Man and Some of His Work. Article in World's Work.

William Travers Jerome, when a member of his public remarks about corrupt labor leaders, and asked him if he would have before their meeting and repeat his statements. "Sure, I'll go anywhere," he said. Accordingly, he appeared one Sunday afternoon in their hall. It was a distinctly hostile crowd that he faced—nine men in ten against him. He did not try to assuage their anger. It is a habit with him to say worse things to a man's face than he says behind his back, and he did not depart from his habit on this occasion.

One of the strongest of Mr. Jerome's many efforts has been to secure an amendment to the present liquor tax law. The present law, by prohibiting the opening of saloons in any street except such as have a sufficient number of guest rooms to put them into the class of hotels, has transformed some 150 saloons into the worst "raunch hotels" breeders of vice and crime. But even three-quarters of the regular saloons do not observe the law. They may lock the front door, but the side door is always open.

By the beginning of 1905 Mr. Jerome had had the law affirmed and was preparing to resume his campaign against the gamblers after a year of non-aggression. Just before he was ready to open fire, the head of the Police Department, a most excellent man but not a very excellent Chief of Police, had an unfortunate complaint mood, during which he announced that gambling houses in New York existed only in history.

Mr. Jerome's activity against corrupt labor leaders gained widespread fame by his prosecution and conviction of Sam Parnes and other walking delegates. The incident that occurred at the beginning of this campaign shows both his audacity and his power. The Central Federated Union, representing nearly a quarter of a million of union members in New York, was rarely get complete facts and figures in the case of experiments in municipal ownership.

An interesting exception is the case of the municipal lighting plant of Eagle, Ill. This has been in existence for 20 years. What is left of its plant has just been turned over to the local traction company on a contract to operate it for about two-thirds what it cost the city.

The plant cost about \$2,000 and started with about 12 lamps. The figures for the running expenses include maintenance and betterment, though we see no charge for interest on bonds or depreciation of plant. The latter probably comes in on the valuation put on the plant at the time of the transfer. In 17 years the number of lamps increased to 37 and running expenses from \$100 to about \$25,000.

Not long ago Canadian Northern 1 per cent, similarly guaranteed, found only an indifferent market, and it is reported that the underwriters have been forced to carry about one-half of the issue of \$1,525,257. Some of this has recently been taken at the same figure as the Grand Trunk bonds. Grand Trunk Pacific a year ago, guaranteed by this company, were placed in February at 95.

What the Patient Needs. Philadelphia Ledger. "Mrs. Nagge" said the doctor, "your husband needs a rest. He must go to Europe for three months."

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Experiment in Public Lighting. We rarely get complete facts and figures in the case of experiments in municipal ownership.

Cost of College Sports. In order to place 11 young men of Yale in the field against Princeton and Harvard last Autumn \$25,000 was spent, or more than \$2000 a head. This was for 200 youths to row against Harvard, a test of 20 minutes, cost Yale \$14,828.55, or \$2000 a head, not counting the coxswain. This is boat racing at a cost of the best part of a thousand dollars a minute.

Monster Tramp of the Sea. The shark known as the elephant, bone and Basking shark roams nearly all temperate seas. Its mouth is comparatively small and bears 15 or 20 rows of very small teeth. It is a voracious animal. The gill openings are enormous and the gill rakers long, close together and slender, recalling whalebone, hence the name, white shark. The skin is rough, covered with short spines.

Discipline in the Japanese Army. The correspondent of the London Mail at Port Arthur describes an incident of the siege of the Fortress, when after a disastrous attack the Russian position, a Japanese reserve regiment was ordered to renew the attempt. Not a man stirred. The Major in command advanced alone, vainly calling to his men to follow. He was soon killed, and after a time the regiment, apparently struck with remorse, advanced to the assault, which completely failed. The regiment was sent back to the rear, punished with forced drills and compelled to listen to services in memory of its dead Major before it was allowed to go to the front again.

For the Swell Banquet. Chicago Tribune. Cook—the best tenderloin you have furnished us for this evening is the toughest I've ever had in the house. Chef—All right, I'll put it in the menu as chincinos steak, and made it the piece de resistance.

Cautious Uncle Si. Chicago News. "You've never catch old Uncle Si?" "He's a good one."

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