

The Oregonian

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Portland, Thursday, March 1, 1906. All who were present at the investigation of inquiry last night into the affairs of the gas company saw and heard, and all who may read the report...

The Oregonian expressed doubt, as all know, of the validity or substantiality of this scheme. It still entertains such doubt—the more so now from such utterances as those accredited to Mr. Woods.

The Oregonian is sorry indeed that the undertaking dwindled to a prospect, so soon. But no matter. When the Oregonian has heretofore stated, congratulatory acknowledgments will be due from the Oregonian.

Just now there is inquiry into the gas business. It is in progress from one side of the continent to the other. It is a leading topic in New York, in Chicago, in Kansas City, in San Francisco, in Portland.

Upon the knowledge thus obtained the municipality is to fix the maximum price of gas, of electricity or street-car service, and of service under other public franchises—allowing a fair return for the service, and no more.

In allowing a fair return upon the value of the property actually employed in the gas-making business, account has been taken of the nature and hazard of the business and of the return allowed on similar investments.

The commission thinks that \$ per cent is a reasonable return upon the actual value of the property owned by the company and used in the manufacture and distribution of gas.

It is insolent presumption, on the part of any public-service corporation, operated on public franchise and owing its very existence to the favor of public franchise, to assume or pretend that it has a right to keep information as to any part of its operations from the knowledge of the people.

is a reasonable return upon the actual value of the property owned by the company and used in the manufacture and distribution of gas. It will be remembered that this return is not based upon the capitalization of the company, but upon the actual capital engaged in the manufacture and distribution of gas.

The situation in Portland, though on a small scale by comparison, is substantially parallel. The people are going to put an end to the abuses of a system built up on their own franchises. In order to get at a basis for action, the workings of the gas company of Portland are to be turned inside out.

Resistance to inquiry into capitalization of stock and bonds, and the methods by which the Oregonian is being pumped out of the hot air and pouring in the water, but the good suffered with the bad and Wall street lost hundreds of millions before the scare had run itself out and values had settled to a healthy basis.

With the memory of what happened at that time fresh in her mind, New York is showing a disposition to cease buying. There has been a rampant bull market for months, for a year in fact, and the more cautious traders are showing signs of apprehension that they, like Morgan, may "get" something at a high price and be compelled to carry it down through a long period of declining markets, or lose it out at a sacrifice.

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Let us sell the prunes, lumber, sheep, wool, hops, wheat, salmon and a large number of other staples which have made Oregon famous, and we care not who sells them. East or West, amalgamated or New York traction, our amalgamated trading commodities grow much more rapidly than those to which the East is accustomed, and the world stands in greater need of them.

The observant foreigner, visiting the United States with his eyes open, sees in things American vast possibilities but little in the line of great and permanent development that has been pushed to a finished stage. The wave of interest fostered by agricultural engineering and activity in irrigation in recent years has led our own people to believe that the country was outstripping the old world in these matters.

Mr. Wood, speaking for the gas company last night, made a mistake as to this newspaper. He said the gas company was operating under a public franchise, and so was The Oregonian. The necessary correction is that The Oregonian is not operating under a franchise, but is a franchise, nothing whatever, from the public.

A big fat pocketbook saved the life of an anti-league organizer at Salem the other night, turning aside the dagger of an assassin. Here is an argument that the campaign fund solicitors of the league should not overlook.

The Idaho banker who is making a name for himself as a writer of fiction is not the pioneer of his profession in that field in these parts. The Seattle clearing-house has been engaged in similar work for years.

who are going to do great things and have all millions behind them. Excuse The Oregonian. It will wait and see.

SOME SIGNS OF A SQUALL. The financial expert was detailing the history of a certain railroad property in the Southwest which had considerable Wall-street history a few years ago. "Gould picked it up for a song," said he, "and when he turned it over to Russell Sage he got for it the first ferred. Sage then sold out to John W. Gates and the Chicago crowd at \$0, and when Gates let go he got a hundred and a quarter for it from J. P. Morgan."

Something over two years ago an Oregonian representative visited the west coast of Vancouver Island, and after a study of the local Indian question, ventured the opinion that the white man's religion had accomplished nothing for the west coast Indian in the way of improving mind or morals.

The encouragement given to boys of the manual training classes of the public schools to build nesting-boxes for wrens, bluebirds and swallows, through prizes offered by the Oregon Audubon Society, is praiseworthy. Both beauty and utility will be served in this contest, while the achievement will carry with it gratification at seeing these birds snugly housed, well worth the effort that it costs.

After a while Dr. Morrison will get down to business and tell us something real about the Christian Scientists. An English scientist is of the opinion that laughter is insanity; that the person who laughs is insane temporarily and more or less violently.

Over 1,000,000 umbrellas a year are made in the United States. A few of them are used in Portland, and the rest are lost. When it comes to handling Park Boards Life Pence is right there.

If negroes could always be sure that an incendiary mob would found them immediately upon the event of any characteristic negro degradation, then the negroes would soon grow tractable citizens. Mob law is not pleasant, but it is sometimes salutary.

The annual outbreak of troubles among the coal mines is about due, and we hear the mutterings of the storm as it approaches. When you think you need a brace just brace up in your mind. These scientists and professional sharps of all kinds tell plenty of lies, but their statement that mind is more powerful than matter happens to be true.

Definitions. (Tips on the Race of Life.) Rook—The silver used at racetracks when they take the collection. Fool—It's hard to define this, for a good chance hits him. A woman can't be a fool because she's always wise.

Slipper—The pressure of all eyes—just like a man when he's well heeled. Slippers and men both must be well heeled in order to be successful in their business. Business—The origin of the pace that kills. A term applicable to men only. Women have no business. They have professions. Mrs. Warren, now, for example—but that's another story.

Changed Church to Suit. Exchange. An absent-minded woman one Sunday morning walked into church, took a front seat, and joined in the service vigorously. Then the collection-basket was passed to her, and putting a coin in it, she looked about. She cast glances in every direction, her mind cleared, and an expression of amazement overcame her face. She got up. She hurried down the aisle. She overtook the man with the collection-basket. "I'm in the wrong church," she whispered, and taking out the coin she had put in, she hurried forth.

Effect of Local Option. Houston Post. A crockery factory near San Antonio is now confining all its resources to the making of jugs. One firm in San Antonio bought two crockery of one and two-gallon jugs the other day.

Where Hubby Comes In. Atechion Globe. An Athlon woman advertised for a cook, saying in the advertisement that "a man" was employed to do the "heat and work." "But we haven't any man," protested her husband. "That's you," responded his wife.

THE SILVER LINING.

Good Morning. Tell me not in mournful numbers I'm a chimney I know it well. Visions haunt me in my slumbers, Showing me I can't be well. Life is speedy! Life is earnest! And the grave we're pressing fast; Earth thou art, to earth return; We are game up to the last!

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It isn't what you know that counts, for there is nothing really new under the sun. It's your original viewpoint that makes you important. Be thankful if you can, my boy; but be swift at all events.

God made the world. But a few persons (who inherited a part of Portland) assume that they made it all and own it all. The most extravagant women in the world are the New York women. Yes, and they are the prettiest also.

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LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE

Discussion by Writers on Various Topics of Public Interest. PORTLAND, Feb. 28.—(To the Editor.)—In addition to your excellent editorial on water supply, allow me to say that as the population increases in all countries, the purification of the water supply becomes imperative, and that only mountain villages or cities in the foothills escape the trouble and expense of filtration.

In general there are two classes of filters or purification processes, slow or continuous sand filters, and mechanical filters. About 20 cities in this country use sand filters, and about the same in Germany and the United States use the continuous sand filtration system; in fact, nearly all European cities with a population aggregating 20,000,000 use it. In the United States nearly 20 cities and towns use some sort of a mechanical filter. But a few years ago Albany, N. Y., erected a magnificent sand filter at a cost of nearly \$500,000. It has reached a bacteria efficiency of 99 per cent.

Properly constructed sand filters purify from 1,500,000 to 2,500,000 gallons of water in 24 hours, according to the degree of turbidity of the water. But a mechanical filter requires a sedimentation in addition to the filter, and there must be enough sand to filter the water. These filters cost about \$25,000 per acre, more or less according to location, cost of the right kind of sand, and the cost of the water. They must be added cost of pumps, power, water tank sedimentation, basin, etc. Probably the total cost would be between \$4 and \$5 per capita. The cost of sand filters, as here originated in the United States at a time when no first cost, regardless of permanency of construction, was desired by laymen. These filters are simply a cylinder of sand, with a layer of sand, water was forced through them about 100 times faster than ordinary sand filtering. Since then they have been developed into a mechanical filter, and the one grain of sulphate of alumina produces an efficiency of 98 to 99 per cent, but this result depends upon the condition of water. The cost of sand filters is about \$20 per square foot of area per foot, exclusive of buildings, pumps, etc., which sometimes double the cost. The cost of the sand is the cost of the operation is a little more than the cost of operating a slow sand filter.

Thorough filtration removes about 99 per cent of the bacteria. If a water supply can be taken from some mountain stream at a point in the mountains where no people live near it, or from springs which are the outlet of deep strata, it is a good safe supply. Otherwise, the water should be filtered. WILLIAM B. CHASE.

"THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE." PORTLAND, Feb. 27.—(To the Editor.)—The many triangular lots of Portland are most excellent sites for monuments of a Lincoln, a Washington, a McKinley, type of the patriotic, of the American Revolution, the Civil War, and the Spanish-American War, the arts and sciences, navigation, water of Oregon's sons and daughters, and a multitude of other subjects and incidents. The most remarkable thought of the many minds that visited the Lewis and Clark Exposition was, "Where are your monuments?" You have them, but they are a matter of course in your Mount Hood, Mount St. Helena, Mount Adams, Mount Jefferson and Mount Rainier, but where are the splendid monuments of the great men of the state? The marble, cast bronze, carvings, frescoes, paintings, the fancies of the many fertile minds that Portland has produced, are there is time for the aesthetic, and the esthetic in art is the making of the city beautiful. WILLIAM WORDSWORTH GOODRICH.

Democratic Vagaries as to the Election of U. S. Senator. EUGENE, Or., Feb. 27.—(To the Editor.)—While much has been said concerning the "Democratic Vagaries" in the matter that, so far as I have seen, remains untouched. Democratic newspapers and politicians are insistent upon the "Democratic Vagaries" that part of the primary law that they would have every legislative candidate, especially Republican candidates, sign the platform of the Democratic party for United States senator, unconditionally, whereby each and every Senator and Representative would be under obligations to support the same candidate, and to record when they have had opportunity to emphasize their approval of such method of electing United States Senators?

Need of Canteen in Army. But Its Restoration by Congress Is Not Likely at This Time. Boston Evening Transcript. A bill has been introduced in Congress and is now before the committee on military affairs, providing for the restoration of the Army canteen. We do not look for its passage, partly because of the timidity of members who do not dare displease a certain element in the army, and partly because the legislative effort is so large that it is not likely to be reached. Questions of expediency and questions of moral regulation that have been recently settled, even though such settlement was wrong, stand a poor chance of reconsideration against the pressure of new propositions. But we believe this will be an ever recurring question until it is settled right. Were it put upon its merits and given reasonable consideration, it ought not take long to dispose of. The canteen has now been out of commission for several years. It is possible that the canteen is not an absolute necessity, but it is a matter of evidence whether its abolition has been a benefit or an injury to the military service and has helped to hurt the morals of the American soldier.

The action was taken in deference to the prejudices of many people, no well-meaning, but who are not serving beer and light wines to the Army. The canteen had been an institution of long standing. It was abolished on the theory that it worked injury to the morals and discipline of the Army. That theory has now had a thorough test, and the question to be decided is whether or not it is justified. If the soldiers behave themselves better; if there is less drunkenness and other vice; if the absence are fewer and higher standards of conduct have been established, it ought not be difficult to prove the fact. Let the records be examined. Let the testimony of commanding officers and military inspectors be taken, and on a basis of comparison established. Then it should be easy to decide which system had better served the cause of temperance and discipline.

But there are so many ex-cathedra statements to the effect that the abolition of the canteen has been followed by a moral demoralization of the service that some attention should be paid to them. Let us remember that it is not a question of light wine and beer, but of the one having a better influence on the other. It is a question of nothing at the post and strong drinks and bad ones on leave of absence. The canteen had a right to exist, generally attend indulgence when restraint has been removed. Army scandals have been multiplied manifold since the canteen was abolished. This is the general testimony of officers, and that testimony is to be trusted because whatever the personal habits of officers themselves may be they certainly prefer that system for the men under their that will keep them up to the highest standards of order and self-discipline, because that makes their own tasks easier and their responsibilities lighter.

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The Courage of Venus. The Venus of Milo explained. "The Venus of Milo is a statue and they freeze off," she yawned. Thus indeed do we see what women will endure for fashion.

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