

The Oregonian

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Portland, Wednesday, April 3. Should we weep or smile because labor is scarce and wages high? In almost every industry from railroading to farming the demand for workmen exceeds the supply. Does this promote the prosperity of the country or check it? At first glance the answer seems plain enough. Were there more laborers to be had and at lower wages, land would be cleared, forests sawn into lumber, mines worked and railroads built much more rapidly and extensively than they are now. It is true, but is it the assertion true? Not entirely. The difficulty is that when wages are low the returns from invested capital are small, the rewards of enterprise meager and industry lags. The man who demands low wages and great enterprise simultaneously asks for incompatible conditions. Bad times make low wages and low wages make bad times. On the other hand, prosperity and high wages react upon each other in the same way.

Many employers hold the opinion that money paid for wages is withdrawn from business, but no error could be more patent. If workmen hoarded their money, of course, the more they got the worse it would be for productive industry; but they do nothing of the kind. Either through necessity or through habit they spend their money as fast as they get it. The fact is that when wages are low the returns from invested capital are small, the rewards of enterprise meager and industry lags. The man who demands low wages and great enterprise simultaneously asks for incompatible conditions. Bad times make low wages and low wages make bad times. On the other hand, prosperity and high wages react upon each other in the same way.

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labor presently outruns the supply and wages necessarily rise. When, on the other hand, capital is timid and men will not venture to speculate, there is no market for labor, the supply of hands exceeds the demand for them, and wages fall. Some business must be done even in the worst of times, but the profit is so little that the employer finds it difficult to pay his help. Thus, as we said above, it is easier to pay high wages in good times than low ones in bad times.

To pine for cheap labor is to pine for the stagnation of industry. The employer must choose between high wages out of large profits, or low ones out of small profits. There is no alternative. It may be replied to us that the Chinese, who do not admit they would take up farm work, which strikes for help, and would not compete with workmen in other callings. This might be true were the Chinese only half-witted. But, since they are quick to learn and not slow to perceive an advantage, they would move rapidly into those employments which pay the most money for the least work, and in these they would compete with white labor until the general wage scale fell so low that white men would be forced into tasks which they now scorn.

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filled by the birth of Alphonso XIII some seven months after the death of his father, and to this boy, a King from his birth, the Queen mother devoted her life, with the result that Spain has now a fairly decent King, as Spanish Kings go, and a people loyal to him and to the traditions of the country.

An ambitious mother, a judicious sovereign, a tactful woman, this Austrian Princess has sunk herself in her adopted country and is as truly a Spaniard as is the son whom she has given to the throne of Spain. The esteem in which she is held by the Spanish people was shown in the panic into which she was thrown when it was announced a few days ago that she was seriously ill.

IN A NUTSHELL. Excerpts relating to property taken from the news columns of The Oregonian yesterday and epitomized for ready reference: Surplus in Government receipts for March, \$10,000,000. Surplus for nine months, \$51,000,000; an increase of \$45,000,000 over last year. Decrease of public debt in March, \$11,500,000. Increase in circulation of National bank notes in one year, \$42,500,000. Gold and silver coinage for March, \$6,000,000.

Increase of 21 per cent in sales of stamps at the Portland postoffice. Here are figures that need no comment; they speak for themselves. While no one will rejoice over the misfortunes of others, Oregon fruit-growers will see encouragement for their own industry in the assertion of a speaker before the Western New York Agricultural Society that in the next few years one-third to one-half of the apple orchards of New York and surrounding states will disappear. This prediction is based upon an observation of the rapid progress the San Jose scale pest is making in Eastern fruit sections. On the Pacific coast, the growers early realized the seriousness of the damage wrought by the scale, and they have studied remedies. Fighting San Jose scale is as much a regular part of the fruitgrower's work in California, Oregon and Washington as is cultivation of the soil.

The Washington Post has a world-wide reputation for possessing "the courage of its convictions," but for some inexplicable reason has on one important matter, the proposed school law, taken the opposite side. On March 4 The Oregonian said that "after today Senator Mulkey will be once more a private citizen, and the Senate will have no handsome man—at least none worth mentioning." The Post asserts that there is still a handsome man in the Senate, and that it would be worth while to have his name mentioned, but concludes by saying: "We could name him, if we would." If this attempted evasion came from some papers, there would be nothing to be said upon it, but when it comes from the Post, it merits attention. The Oregonian is still of the opinion that there remains in the Senate no handsome man worth mentioning, and that if the Post thinks there is it is afraid to mention his name. Bring on your beauty.

The site selected for the new home for the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. is a very desirable one and will be generally approved. It lies upon the north side of Taylor street, between Sixth and Seventh, and covers a full half block. On the border line of the business district, it is a desirable place for the young people of Portland, and strangers visiting in the city, to spend their leisure time. It is understood that the property was secured at less than the price for which it has been held by the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. The purchase price is to be congratulated upon the selection.

The announcement of the death of Mrs. Margery Serena Bellinger, widow of the late Judge Bellinger, will cause a shock of pain and surprise to a multitude of her friends and the friends of her family in this city. Married very early in her girlhood to Charles B. Bellinger, then also in his early youth, Mrs. Bellinger spent many years as a happy wife and an affectionate mother. "We were just a boy and girl, he 19 and I 17, when we were married," Mrs. Bellinger when her late husband passed away, adding, "and we never regretted it." In this testimony there is all of life that is compressed in marriage. Of the seven children that were born to her, four survive Mrs. Bellinger. Of her useful, happy, and contented many friends of a lifetime bear witness.

The City of Eugene has voted in favor of municipal ownership of its water and light plant. This may be taken as a desire to secure these public utilities for the benefit of the people, and the supply of water shall always be of the best. Eugene is not a town unto itself, entitled to consider only its own wishes. It is the seat of the State University, where young people of every part of the state are sent every year for higher education. It is the people of the state to make certain that its water supply shall be always the best that can be had. Responsibility for fulfillment of this obligation will always rest upon the city, and not upon any other private water supply system. Every citizen of the water system is therefore desirable.

Because The Oregonian quoted from and criticized a Roseburg paper that set up a "hard times" wall, other papers in that city are angry. If you don't like it, you can tear it down, they say. The paper, which was published at its source, The Oregonian, didn't believe there was occasion for the wall, and said so.

In taking over Hammond's road to Astoria, James J. Hill has formally invaded Oregon's strip of territory a hundred miles along the coast will be welcomed further conquest with ninety-pound steel.

After selection is made of fifty Pittsburg families worthy to attend the Carnegie banquet—a most delicate task for the committee of education—it must be taken up—a work not so delicate.

St. Johns polled 625 votes at the city election Monday, an increase of nearly 50 per cent over the vote one year ago. What other Portland suburb shows like expansion?

It is to be hoped that the movement started for Saturday afternoons off during July and August will not apply to ice cream and sundae establishments.

Colonel James Hamilton Lewis will now disappear over the Chicago horizon, leaving a crimson wake.

No gambling in Montana and no Senatorial election. What a dull town Helena would be!

REPRESENTATION FOR GUARD. Appropriation of \$25,000 a Beneficial Tax Says Colonel Jackson. PORTLAND, April 2.—To the Editor: Referring to a statement in yesterday's Oregonian, that the Grange would demand a referendum on the bill passed by the state legislature to appropriate \$25,000 a year, for four years, to build armories for the National Guard of the state, it seems pertinent to inquire if they understand the terms of the bill and the necessity that exists for its provisions.

The increase of values in the state is such that it is almost impossible for companies, outside of Portland, where a fine armory has been provided by Multnomah County, to find room for housing for the amount allotted by the state for company expenses. Many armories now used are mere barns, but one of the excellently armory at Eugene, wholly unfitted for its purpose. The United States Government is now furnishing nearly all of the arms and accoutrements for the troops, and every captain is responsible, under his bond, for over \$2,000 of United States property, which he has no means of properly caring for, and which when lost, either by or to the state will have to pay for. A great many of the armories have already been abandoned. Under these circumstances, to hold an officer financially responsible for all the property issued to him and yet provide for him no adequate means of protecting it, is to care for it, does not seem to the lay mind to be right and just.

The best of intentions and do not accuse it of being a knocker that whines at everything proposed out of the prosaic and stereotyped order. When the croakers and the mosquitoes are barked along with the old Indian blanket and tomahawk, then and then only will Oregon be able to take her place where she belongs in the ranks of the great states of the Union. We are not gaining much if any on our neighbors in the columns of progress. With the Girls' Drill Company, we can put our state a few lengths ahead. The peculiar language of Mr. Parker characterizes those who oppose anything not in their line. His proposition to have the girls demonstrate their ability to bake and perform other domestic duties is a good idea. But it should be top one-sided without a sample of woodchopping and potato hoeing by 40 promoters of Mr. Parker's school.

My experience with Oregon girls is worthy of attention and I believe will make good the claim of our advertising literature that Oregon's climate has surpassed. Nine years ago, I took a drill company of 41 village girls, got together without regard to their physical qualifications, to Astoria on a six days strenuous campaign. They were active some days, from 4 o'clock in the morning until 11 o'clock at night. Drilling and military routine with marching, for ten days from five to 15 miles, and many daily feet were blistered—but not one girl missed a drill, march, roll call or meal. Last Summer, I drilled a company of girls at the Tillamook Fair, and some of the girls lived six miles in the country. They rode their bicycles to town in the afternoon and drilled from 3 until 4 o'clock; wheeled home and milked six cows, wheeled back again to the fair, and drilled until 10 o'clock, and wheeled home again at night. They kept this up many days—and thought little of it.

I have confidence in the physical excellence of the Oregon woman. Her matchless complexion is an evidence of the vitality that Oregon's climate has imparted. I have written a book on "The Effect of Tropical Light on White Men," published by Redman & Co., New York, and have recently called attention to the fact that the Pacific Northwest Coast of our country is the best climate for white men that we have. Not only do army statisticians state that our soldiers are less sickly there, but the types of native humanity are better than in more sunny climates. I have written much on this subject, and your attention has been called to it. The East is wondering at the intrepidity of these Oregon girls, and I am wondering how I am to direct this offered energy to the glory of the state. The Indian and cowboy features could be eliminated, but this would in a great measure destroy the attractiveness of the organization. The home training that these girls have had and the training that is in store for them, will enable them to make good in every-thing that will be required of them, whether in their drills, up-to-date classical music, piano, riding-horse, milking cows, cooking, teaching school, stage recitations, and in fact everything that goes to make up a high-grade Oregon girl.

J. C. COOPER. Alton Hog of Swill Financier. Hartford (Conn.) Courant. We have had our eyes opened as to what eminent financiers do and are. The average hog in his pen is abstemious and self-restrained compared with the plunderer who plucked the Alton.

Burglar Forfeits \$400 Bail. SALEM, Or., April 2.—(Special.)—Sheriff Culver is looking for R. W. Porteous, one of the quartette of alleged burglars who robbed the Fair Grounds store last February, who has skipped out, forfeiting his bail of \$400, put up by his father, James Stewart, a member of the board of directors of the fair. Porteous is charged with the burglary and will be sentenced Friday. Stewart is an old-timer, having served a sentence in Folsom. C. A. Larsen, recently discharged from the United States Navy, and Ed. Regan, an ex-railroad brakeman, are the other two men indicted in the same case.

Small Blaze in Paper Mill. OREGON CITY, Or., April 2.—(Special.)—Prompt action prevented a disastrous fire in the mills of the Williams-Pulp & Paper Company this afternoon, when a box on the gear that furnishes power to the grinders overheated, and the woodwork was set on fire. The mill is equipped with excellent apparatus for fighting fire, and the danger was soon suppressed.

Officers Barlow Toll Road. OREGON CITY, Or., April 2.—(Special.)—The annual meeting of the Mount Hood & Barlow Toll Road Company, which controls the tollgate on the road to Mount Hood, was held here yesterday and the following officers were chosen: M. A. Moore, president; Charles H. Canfield, secretary; E. J. Johnson, vice-president; E. G. Canfield, treasurer.

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