

The Oregonian

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give such reasons as these learn the art of good cookery, by all means. The city of it is that their education in this art has not been going on in their mothers' kitchens and under mothers' direction for years past. Since it has not, however, as attested by the applicants themselves, who are required to state whether they have done any cooking at home, it cannot begin too soon. If kept free from fads, plain, practical methods are pursued, and the object of preparing good, wholesome food without the waste that follows experiment, is maintained, the domestic science course cannot fail to become popular in the homes that furnish pupils to the high school, as well as a factor of no mean importance in the health and happiness of the homes over which girls now in the high school will in a few years preside.

"Mothers should teach their girls to cook," say we of the old-fashioned brigade. Granted. But if, owing to conditions incident to the transition era in which we live, it is not practicable to do this, then by all means let the schools take a hand in the matter, to the end that the next generation be not born in apartment houses and brought up on restaurant slops, bakers' pies and street-corner confectionery, and the preparation of good, palatable, digestible, home-cooked food become a lost art.

THE FREAKISH RECALL. So short are the terms of most officials in our state that there is no need of the "recall" initiative petition known as "the recall." In most cases the term of the official would expire before "the recall" could be made effective. Besides, the recall would be an instrument in the hands of personal and political enemies to trouble and annoy objects of their dislike.

Applied to Justices of the Supreme and Circuit Courts, it would tend to weaken the respect entertained for them by the people, and would fan party spirit to an extraordinary degree over officials who should at all times be as exempt as possible from it.

It is vicious, moreover, because it proposes another unnecessary and possibly a dangerous change of the constitution of the state. It is a list of the "petitions" and "measures" no argument is submitted with this proposition; presumably because even its author had not the hardihood to attempt it.

Scrutinize every proposition to amend the constitution, as well as those that appear very few of them should meet with approval. Most of them are of revolutionary character; and the only chance of their adoption is the inattention of the electors.

MALICIOUS MISREPRESENTATION. The Oakland Tribune, through ignorance or malice, has been making extravagant and unjust statements about the Columbia River bar. The Tribune terms the objections made to the discrimination of Secretary Metcalf as "childish and unjust," and, with nonchalant disregard for the facts, asserts that "one of the most dangerous harbor entrances in the United States is over the Columbia bar." The depth, asserts the Oakland paper, "is a scant twenty-three feet, and the mouth of the great river is proverbially a rough bit of water, as many a wreck attests." The depth of water on the Columbia River, on an average high tide, is thirty-three feet. There is sufficient depth at less than half tide to admit of the passage of any ship in the Pacific battleship fleet, and deeper draft vessels than most of the craft in this fleet come and go at all hours without regard to the stage of tide.

It has become a newspaper printed near the Golden Gate to make any allusion to "wrecks" near the Columbia River. Not only is the number of wrecks at the Golden Gate much greater than those charged up against the Columbia River, but the loss of life on single disasters to vessels entering or leaving San Francisco is many times greater than the aggregate on all of the vessels that have been wrecked near the Columbia bar in the past fifty years. No such wrecks at the City of Rio de Janeiro have ever darkened the record of the Columbia River, and the Valencia wreck, which cost \$1,000,000, the entrance to Puget Sound, could never have happened in the vicinity of the Columbia bar. These wrecks are not mentioned as reasons why the Navy Department should refuse to send ships to San Francisco or Puget Sound, but they certainly show that, from the standpoint of safety, there is no percentage for the ports which are favored with a visit from the fleet.

The Oakland paper is apparently unaware of the fact that a draft or a foot in length is no greater on a battleship than it is on a merchantman, and, as the battleship is much greater in draft, the draft which comes and goes without encountering the slightest difficulty, there can be no good reason for failure of Secretary Metcalf to send the ships here. Portland has been subjected to a vast amount of misrepresentation since the California Secretary of the Navy placed his ban of disapproval on the port, but nothing sillier or at a greater variance with the facts has yet appeared than the screed of the Tribune.

BOGUS APPEAL FOR COMMON SCHOOLS. Many of the opponents of the University of Oregon appropriation bill base their opposition upon the assertion that a larger proportion of the educational expenditures should be devoted to the common schools. It must be remarked, however, that the anxiety of these people for the welfare of the common schools was not very much in evidence until the university appropriation bill came up for consideration. Their appeal in behalf of the common schools may, therefore, be attributed more to their desire to defeat the appropriation bill than to their interest in the common schools. Doubtless they are loyal friends of the common schools, but it is safe to say that a very considerable proportion of those who now oppose the university appropriation make a practice of voting against increased tax levies for common schools.

In his address at Salem in behalf of the appropriation bill Superintendent of Public Instruction J. H. Ackerman asserted that the university is the head of our educational system. If so, it will not be inappropriate to call the common school the foundation of the educational system. It is in the common schools that every boy and girl lays the foundation for his high school and college education, and if that foundation be weak, the superstructure must forever be unsafe and uncertain. The Oregonian, as a supporter of the university appropriation, proposes also that the common school system be strengthened, and that the expenditure of more money. This is not a proposal that money be spent needlessly or extravagantly, but that, in order to secure a greater public school service, a larger amount of money be expended therefor.

The suggestion is this—that the minimum length of the school year be increased from four months to six months. Prior to 1907 the minimum number of months schools would be maintained was three, but the Legislature of that year increased the minimum to four months. Of course a large majority of the districts maintain public schools for more than four months, all of the city schools having terms covering eight or nine months. But there are many districts in rural communities that limit themselves to the shortest term allowed by law, and as a consequence the children in these districts do not receive the amount of instruction to which they are entitled. The Oregonian believes that as a general principle every child in the state who has not completed the eighth grade should have at least six months' schooling every year. Of course there may be unusual conditions which make exceptions necessary, but the welfare of the children themselves demands that in general they be given more instruction than that required by the law fixing the minimum length of the school year at present. Far back in the mountains or on the plains, where there may be but one or two children within a radius of many miles, it might be impracticable to require that schools be maintained for a period of six months, and yet instances of this kind must be rare. The law should be so framed as to insure the maintenance of a school for six months wherever there are children to be taught. If a requirement of that kind would necessitate the levying of special taxes heavier than the people of the district could bear, why not probably, then the plan of distributing the school funds should be changed for the purpose of throwing a larger proportion of the funds into the remote districts. In such districts it is very commonly the case that non-residents—owners of timber lands, for example—pay a large proportion of any special taxes levied. Now are the districts that cannot afford to maintain a school for six months by means of special taxes added to the funds received from the state?

Let us strengthen our common schools by increasing the length of the school year in those districts where it is now too short.

Mr. Harriman has just completed, at a cost of \$2,500,000, an 11 1/2-mile stretch of track between Omaha and Lane, Neb., thereby reducing the length of the main line of the Union Pacific nine miles. At first glance this would seem a large sum of money to spend on such a small piece of track, but the saving on a per-ton-per-mile basis in the aggregate reach a vast sum every year. Similar improvements on a much smaller scale are now being made on the track between Portland and the Cascades, the original line being reconstructed at a cost greater than that of the original construction. Whatever criticism may be directed against Mr. Harriman's stock market tactics, his policy of opening up new territory, he has through out his career displayed remarkable and praiseworthy consistency in his efforts to keep his roads in perfect physical condition.

The latest issue of the New York Financial and Commercial Chronicle contains a detailed review of the bank clearings of the principal cities of the United States for the first four months of 1908. In the Pacific division and in the country as a whole Portland makes a very good showing. San Francisco shows a decrease of 31.1 per cent, Los Angeles 28.9 per cent, Seattle 21.1 per cent, and Portland but 17.8 per cent, with the average decrease for the entire Pacific group 27 per cent. The average decrease for all clearing-house cities in the United States for the four months was 26.8 per cent. It is, of course, not very pleasing to be obliged to mention a decrease as being favorable, but it is gratifying to note that Portland continues to make a much better comparative showing than the other large Coast cities, or than the average for all of the clearing-house cities of the United States.

In Alberta, Canada, on the Canadian Pacific Railroad, about sixty miles north of the Montana line, a large herd of buffaloes has been wintered, with very little loss. There are about 400 head, and 100 calves are expected this Spring. These buffaloes have been fed on hay all Winter, but they foraged a good deal for themselves. Since then the higher temperature has been in a large preserve, in which the herd will be cared for and protected. Another herd, nearly as large, has been wintered further east, and the two will soon be joined, making the largest herd of buffaloes known to exist. By the end of the year the herd will number nearly one thousand, with a probable net increase of 25 per cent annually.

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It doesn't appear that Mr. Chamberlain can really expect to gain anything by his pose for non-partisanship. It can hardly mislead anybody. He will be a non-partisan till a purely Democratic act is passed, and then as a Democrat as any Democrat of them all. But some think no party question will ever arise again.

The appropriation for the State University most certainly will be upheld. It should be upheld by a great majority. It would be a revolutionary change in our system of taxation and finance. Doubtless it will be rejected; but it should be rejected by such a vote as will prevent forever its reappearance in Oregon.

The Legislature will be Republican; the majority will be committed to Statement No. 1, and it is quite ridiculous to say that it will not elect Mr. Chamberlain, should he receive the plurality of the popular vote. Don't worry about that. There will be worry enough without it.

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Be on the lookout this week, all along the coast of Oregon, for the war fleet. There will be a few visitors to our coast points. Weather may be clearer on the coast than it is in the interior.

Nothing but the fear that he may be brought to the surface again constrains us to refrain from inquiring as to the whereabouts of Hon. Leslie M. Shaw, Iowa's late favorite son.

Small use to complain of the alleged mistakes of the late Republican State Convention. Nobody supposes that dissension in the party could be made deeper or wider than it is.

Probably the most suitable general definition of a reformer is a person who has a burning desire to regulate other people's affairs.

Now Nat Goodwin wants to marry Edna Goodrich, an actress. Nothing to the rumor, then, that Nat, or was, married to Maxine Elliott?

Dr. Harriman has just completed, at a cost of \$2,500,000, an 11 1/2-mile stretch of track between Omaha and Lane, Neb., thereby reducing the length of the main line of the Union Pacific nine miles. At first glance this would seem a large sum of money to spend on such a small piece of track, but the saving on a per-ton-per-mile basis in the aggregate reach a vast sum every year. Similar improvements on a much smaller scale are now being made on the track between Portland and the Cascades, the original line being reconstructed at a cost greater than that of the original construction. Whatever criticism may be directed against Mr. Harriman's stock market tactics, his policy of opening up new territory, he has through out his career displayed remarkable and praiseworthy consistency in his efforts to keep his roads in perfect physical condition.