The Oregonian

PORTLAND, OREGON.

Entered at Portland, Oregon, Postoffice as Second-Class Matter.

Subscription Rates—Invariably in Advance.

(By Mail.)

Daily, Sunday included, one year	$8.00
Daily, Sunday included, six months	4.25
Daily, Sunday included, three months	2.25
Daily, Sunday included, one month	.75
Daily, without Sunday, one year	6.00
Daily, without Sunday, six months	3.25
Daily, without Sunday, three months	1.75
Daily, without Sunday, one month	.60
Weekly, one year	1.50
Sunday, one year	2.50
Sunday and weekly, one year	3.50

(By Carrier.)

Daily, Sunday included, one year	9.00
Daily, Sunday included, one month	.75

How to Remit—Send postoffice money order, express order or personal check on your local bank. Stamps, coin or currency are at the sender's risk. Give postoffice address in full, including county and state.

Postage Rates—10 to 14 pages, 1 cent; 16 to 28 pages, 2 cents; 30 to 40 pages, 3 cents; 42 to 60 pages, 4 cents. Foreign postage double rates.

Eastern Business Office—The S. C. Beckwith Special Agency—New York, rooms 48-50 Tribune building. Chicago, rooms 510-512 Tribune building.

PORTLAND, SATURDAY, AUGUST 7, 1909.

RESULTS OF THE SPECIAL SESSION.

President Taft's remarks on the new tariff bill are apologetic. He frankly admits that the bill is not what he wanted, since the revision is not complete enough, nor the reductions sufficient; but he signs the bill because he could get no better result. This, probably, is a correct judgment of the situation as presented towards the end of the contention; but had the President interposed earlier it might have been different. Most observers believe his exertions began too late. If he had a right to interpose at all, he had as much right at the early part of the session as in its closing days; and steady pressure from him throughout the session would have brought different results.

But he expresses his satisfaction with the corporation tax; not only as a revenue measure, but as "an important step towards that degree of publicity and regulation which the tendency in corporation enterprises in the last twenty years has shown to be necessary." It would be very well, when applied to public service corporations, and to industrial corporations whose profits are augmented by duties which reduce or exclude foreign competition. But it is not just to thousands upon thousands of private corporations throughout the country, which have no special privileges and no assistance in any way from government or legislation.

It is not merely the exaction of the tax from this class of corporations which is unjust—unjust because business carried on by corporations is subject to tax, while the very same kinds of business carried on by individuals or partnerships is exempt. Great as this injustice is, it is not the chief of the objections. Every corporation, doing business of any description, must make a complete statement of its business and affairs, showing its paid-up capital, its indebtedness or bonds and notes, or otherwise; its gross income and expenses, the total amount of losses each year, interest paid and net income, after making all authorized deductions. These returns, as the act declares, "shall constitute public records and be open to inspection as such." Every person, then, whose curiosity or malevolence moves him, every rival of a business, may get from this "public record" a full statement of all the details of any corporation's business; and even deficits may be exposed, to the injury of the corporation's credit and menace to its solvency. We believe the President has not well considered these objections—else he would not so warmly approve an act which is unjust in the first place, because it taxes all ordinary business operated in corporate form, yet leaves untaxed individuals and partnerships, and moreover exposes private and legitimate corporate business to examination of the curious and to the attack of rivalry.

The public service corporations, that operate under franchises, stand in a class by themselves. The public judgment is that they are entitled to no business secrets; and the laws of most of the states (Oregon included) require frequent statements of all their affairs. The same might well be required of all "protected" industries. But corporations doing local business, organized under the laws of a state, possessing no privileges, having no franchises, their capital consisting of small sums brought together for industrial purposes, so as to make a sum adequate for the business intended, ought not to be penalized by special taxation, nor required to disclose the details and whole state of their business, through public records—making it accessible to those from whom every consideration of business and prudence requires such information to be withheld.

The corporation tax and its searching methods will cause every private corporation, that can do so, to disincorporate as soon as it can. But this, in most cases, will be difficult. There are many small stockholders, and a partnership will be impracticable. The tendency, however, will surely be to break up small private corporations, and to destroy their business. It will convert those who are thus injured into enemies of the Administration and of the Republican party—thousands of them; for it is not an equal, fair or just method of taxation; and it will be resented as injurious and unjust by the vast multitude of stockholders in private corporations. Why should the private corporation, that has no favors from the public, be penalized, when the individual or the partnership is exempt?

Most probably this special and unjust tax will be resisted, on grounds of constitutional law and proportional justice; and, as The Oregonian believes, it is most likely to be defeated. The special session is practically a fiasco, and stands in need of all apologies that can be made for it.

It would be a great thing for the waterways of this country if the matter of appropriations were in the hands of men like Brigadier-General Marshall, Chief of Engineers of the Army. General Marshall believes in appropriations sufficient to complete any work that is undertaken. In an interview in yesterday's Oregonian he expressed himself quite plainly regarding the dilatory manner in which much-needed appropriations are doled out. The great difficulty in all of these public works is in placing them on a business basis. E. H. Harriman, in discussing the improvements in the Columbia River, once remarked that if that stream were the property of a railroad company the owners would dump in a few millions and build a channel of any depth required in a year or two. Such a result will never be possible under the Government method of doing the work, but it would be comparatively easy of accomplishment by the application of business principles to Government work.

AT INDIANAPOLIS THE SAME.

What has happened at Indianapolis is what happens in general, from the very nature of things, under the direct primary law when there is no representative assembly or convention to guide the course of parties. That is, both parties, at Indianapolis, confessedly, have nominated men of little character or standing, for the principal offices. On both sides the candidates who represented the business people and responsible elements of the population were beaten. How it will come out in the election can't be told. For Mayor there may be an independent candidate. If not, the probability is that the disgusted Republicans will support the Democratic candidate for the Mayoralty, and elect him, as a means of giving their own party a lesson.

Self-respecting and responsible citizens never will enter into this primary scramble. The consequence is abandonment of politics and government to an ochlocracy. Parties will be completely dissolved; party names will mean nothing; no principle will appear; there can be no directness or steadiness of action. The method inevitably separates the people into classes. The problem of democracy always is to keep it under wise guidance. The "straight" primary, without representative guidance, brings to the front those least qualified to serve the state. It is so from the very nature of things. Not a representative man appeared on any ticket for Mayor of Indianapolis. Not one will appear in Oregon—unless called out by the assembly plan. Men of worth will not so demean (or bemean) themselves.

THE LAND GAMBLE.

The great National land lottery conducted by the Government in Montana, Washington and Idaho has broken all records for affairs of the kind. In the number of victims it makes a fairly good showing in comparison with the late Louisiana lottery.

That the chances of the victims for drawing any kind of a prize were much greater in the Louisiana lottery is easily apparent when it is stated that only one out of 100 of the applicants stands any show to draw a claim. One of the notaries who took depositions of the applicants made nearly $3000, and others made as high as $125 per day. The railroads received an immense sum in fares, and the hotels, lodging-houses and pickpockets also profited greatly by the rush.

Some of the victims can stand the loss which they have been obliged to incur, but among them are thousands of poor people who can ill afford to lose the money spent on this greatest of modern lotteries. If there is anything in connection with the whole affair that is creditable to the Government, it has not yet been made public.

THE LEISURE HABIT.

The Department of Commerce and Labor, through C. L. Green, an inspector in charge of the New York City branch of the division of information, advances the opinion that enforced idleness during the period, of depression following the panic of 1907, resulted in fixing the leisure habit on a certani class of workingmen, thus adding large numbers to the army of tramps and vagrants. Of this class Inspector Green says:

> Finding it possible to exist without work, idleness seems to have become a habit, and now that the parks are pleasant and the fields hot, they prefer to enjoy the former, living as best they can.

This view is shared by the majority of investigators who have in recent years made the study of the tramp question a speciality. That is to say, these students of cause and effect find that the underlying cause in cases where able bodied men continue in idleness year after year is psychological and that to deal with it with any degree of success it must be dealt with in accordance with this finding.

It will be observed that this explanation itself needs explaining, since it certainly does not give the last word upon the subject. There is, for example, another and far larger class that derives the chief happiness of life from useful employment—work that is remunerative at least to the extent that it guarantees self-support and the support of the family in varying degrees of comfort, according to the individual interpretation of that word. This condition of mind, propelling the body along the path of industry is also a psychological phenomenon. In other words, the controlling influence, whether to idleness or industry, is a purely mental condition. A man wants to work or he does not want to work. Whether he works or tramps depends, at first, partly and after a time solely, upon this mental condition after it reaches the status that we call habit.

There is nothing new in this idea. The most frugal of all New England communities has always had its chronic idler, who lacking the energy even to tramp, wore out the days in sitting on a bench at the village store—lazily, eternally whittling. In order to exist, this man "chored round" and compassing a pittance sufficient to keep base life afoot was well content. The warmth of the store stove was as genial to him in the Winter as would have been the warmth of his own fireside, and the Summer shade of a wayside tree supplied his estimate of noontide comfort. He was simply content with a do-nothing existence while, on the other hand, his thrifty neighbor, to use a current phrase, "was never happy unless he was at work." In the belief of the one which has become a fixed mental habit, work was a sort of endless chain process, the rewards of which were not worth the outlay of energy involved; in that of the other—also a fixed mental condition—work was an expression of energy the rewards of which made life worth living.

These facts were long accepted without any attempt to explain them. It was only when idleness began to assume the form of a contagion and take to the road that it began to be discussed as a problem. Each year since then this problem has grown in magnitude, becoming more and more complex at every step, until now—still unsolved—it contains many vague quantities in addition to what was once bluntly termed "laziness," and later "inability to find work." Among these quantities are prejudices in infinite variety grounded principally in envy of the well-to-do and hatred of the rich; false ideals that have become fixed mental habits; false pride and a sort of psychic collapse that is usually termed lack of self-respect.

It is thus that the problem of reforming a tramp—one even more hopeless of wholesome solution than that of reforming a female prostitute—does not hinge upon success in the attempt to find work for him by which he may earn food, lodging and clothes. It depends upon the ability to inspire him with a desire to work; to endow him with an element, a something, which he has lost; or to create in him a desire for something which he never had.

CONCERNING BILLBOARDS.

Mayor Simon has made another tour of the city and has seen the billboards. He is not impressed with their beauty. Neither is anybody else. Billboards haven't a friend or supporter except the owners. Always they are unsightly, offensive. They stare at you impudently.

The tariff having been disposed of, how will it do inaugurate a reform in the billboard nuisance? Small effort will awaken our dominant civic improvement association. Let's see. Isn't W. D. Wheelwright still the president? Haven't the forty or more district committeemen as much civic pride and public spirit as they had when the organization was formed?

Portland is their home. Not one of them would permit a hideous structure on their own lawns to rasp their own and their neighbors' sensibilities. Collectively this association could effectively apply the same sentiment to the entire city. Maybe they will not be able to abolish billboards; certainly a well directed, concerted movement will serve to regulate billboards through municipal legislation. It is worth while to try to minimize this evil.

DREAMS OF OTHER DAYS.

More than a quarter of a century ago, after the once brilliant mind of the late George Francis Train had become clouded, he was a frequent contributor to the Tacoma Ledger, then edited by a man named Radebaugh. The harmless eccentricities emanating from the zigzag brain of Mr. Train were mostly on the subject of spiritualism, imaginary forces and invisible promptings. These essays were unreal and unreasonable, but often amusing, and they made such a hit in the Ledger that Radebaugh introduced a similar line of unreasonable and imaginary features in his editorial columns. It was around the Columbia River that Radebaugh spread most of his astonishing dreamings and Munchausen-like yarns. A stranger reading the Ledger twenty or twenty-five years ago would surely have gained the impression that the mighty river which forms the boundary line for such a great portion of the State of Washington had barely sufficient depth for the canoe of the Indian.

It was several years ago that Train passed on to that land of dreams in which he seemed to wander during his last days, and most people had the impression that his Tacoma companion in the dreaming art had also departed from this earth. As Tacoma developed into a city the citizens demanded from the newspapers something more than dreams and wild vagaries of a diseased mind, and the Ledger passed out of the control of Radebaugh, and in recent years has shown a disposition to recognize the importance of the great highway to the sea. Recently Radebaugh has returned to earth—or Tacoma—and established a paper named the Tribune, and not even the wildest dreams of Train or the most frantic Columbia River bar ravings of the Radebaugh of the "eighties" were more ridiculous than the attacks the reincarnated Radebaugh is making on the Columbia River.

For the information of Mr. Radebaugh, who is so distressed over the alleged dangers of the Columbia River, we will again state that the average delays to sailing vessels in the Columbia for the past five years have been less than those to the craft obliged to lie in wait in Neah Bay and Clallam Bay awaiting an opportunity to get to sea from Puget Sound. This is not news to the shipping men either of Tacoma or of Portland, but, even as Rip Van Winkle was pardoned for asking crazy questions when he first awakened from his long sleep, so also should Radebaugh be excused for mistaking the conditions existing when he fell asleep for those which now exist.

AS TO FORTUNE-TELLING.

Several fortune-tellers, caught while plying their vocation by means of palm and card reading and alleged clairvoyant powers, contrary to city ordinance, were haled before the Municipal Court a few days ago and upon conviction heavy fines were imposed. These people but cater to an ever present, peculiarly insistent demand. Credulous persons abound. Their name in every community is multitude. They are pursued by a strong and uncontrollable desire to know what the future has in store for them of fame, fortune or love. They do not, generally speaking, mind in the least being humbugged. On the contrary, judging from their repeated attempts to become possessed of a knowledge of future evenis as pertaining to themselves, they enjoy it.

The fortune-teller caters to the demand for a consideration that is usually very willingly rendered. The transaction seems to be a fair one—the score even—as long as the price paid is not ruinous.

Fortune-telling actually contributes to the happiness of nine-tenths of its patrons. Its cost is less than that of many other pastimes in which shallow-minded people engage. Why put it under the ban, especially as it is most adept in hiding, most fertile in expedient and by hook and crook, if not permitted to do so openly, is certain to come up with supply to meet the demand?

An occupation tax that is reasonable but not intended to be prohibitive, ought to sufficiently control this class of business, especially since, in this as in other sins or idiosyncrasies of mankind, prohibition does not prohibit, but merely drives to cover.

Japan, poverty-stricken as a result of the late war, grafting ship subsidies and other features of official extravagance, is still persistent in her efforts to gain a foothold in China. The Japanese Ambassador to Pekin, acting under instructions from his home government, is now endeavoring to persuade the Chinese government to withdraw its objection to Japan's contemplated improvement of the Antung-Mukden Railroad in Manchuria. Japan is very anxious to build this road, but aggressive tactics have been prevented through fear of offending China and again being subjected to a disastrous boycott such as spread havoc with Japan's trade a few years ago. The purchasing power per capita of the Chinese is small, but in the aggregate it proved the most valuable trade asset in the possession of Japan, and for that reason the latter country will proceed with caution before another boycott is declared.

How do you know that Portland has become a city? Because you see it has become the business of every man and of every woman and every child to keep out of the way of the automobiles. Few who drive them have any business; but it is "joy riding." But as Portland grows larger and becomes more intense, there will be less "joy riding." It doesn't require so much or so quick attention now to go across Broadway or Fifth avenue (New York) as to get through the down-town streets of Portland. Not a few, who run autos, drive right ahead, regardless of others on the street. You must take care of yourself. In the night time the danger is on the outer roads. The occupants of the joy wagon rush from one roadhouse to another, getting drunk. But then they are most likely to kill each other, which is not serious at all. Four times out of five, in the city, in the day time, when you must have all your faculties alert to dodge and slip through, the driver of the auto or its occupants have no business at all. They are just "going it," and the toot of the machine means "Get out of the way; make room for the boss of the road!" Now don't you worry; you just get out of the way, be thankful you are allowed to live, and let it go at that.

The late Oregon Legislature, we are told with much unction, voted down a proposition to hold "assemblies" in connection with open primaries. It was and is a subject with which the Legislature could have nothing to do. If the people, or any portion of them, wish to assemble and suggest candidates for nomination, who shall say them nay? This is supposed to be a free country. Besides, Oregon's statesman, who has been elected Governor and Senator, was nominated for either office by an "assembly" that was but a petty clique. His party didn't even deem a petition necessary. A few bosses set up the pins.

The Oregonian never has believed that Hill is behind the Porter Brothers, or that the Porter Brothers have or can obtain resources to carry their scheme through. There's a "big bluff" on each side of the Deschutes Canyon, but room for only one railroad there, and business for only one. Balance of probabilities as to relation of the two parties to the problem, each observer may figure out for himself. But a railroad will be built there.

The purchase of an individual crop of 4000 bushels of wheat at Baker City this week, by flour mill people, at 2 cents a bushel more than it would bring in Portland, does not hurt the market of the metropolis and is a fine thing for the grower. The more deals of this kind throughout the state the greater will be Oregon's prosperity.

Bourne "objects" to the appointment of S. C. Beach as Census Supervisor for Oregon, on the ground that Beach is "obnoxious" to him. Of course. Every man who has not a record as a Populist or silver fanatic, or political nondescript, is "obnoxious" to Bourne.

Colonel Hofer, having secured rain, is still engaged in regulating the universe. The Colonel is a Councilman of the Capital City and in wrestling with the bicycle nuisance has produced an ordinance that compels the rider to dismount when approaching a pedestrian.

Of course, the Democrats were nearly solid against the Payne bill. But they got in it what they wanted wherever they could; and generally they could. Their negative votes were thoughtfully placed where they would do the least harm.

It is suggested Theodore Roosevelt be sent as Ambassador of the United States to Mexico. Good idea; for Diaz is growing old, and no successor appears. The American Ambassador, then, would be just the man to "run" the country.

Mayor Simon has just discovered the billboards. Some others have seen them, too. But is it possible that the average citizen never sees them, or what's on them, until some eagle-eyed citizen calls his attention to them?

A Consular report says coalminers in Wales reject Columbia River salmon and prefer the Fraser River article. It is just possible somebody has been palming off pink catfish on Taffy.

Now that things have quieted down in Alfonso's realm, Portland may interest herself this week with doings in the Deschutes Canyon and the Vaughn-street baseball park.

Jack Johnson, pugilist, is locked up in jail at London, Ontario, for excessive auto-speeding. Now watch the would-be champions try to get at him.

About one in thirty-one will get claims in the Government land lottery. About one in ten of the "also rans" can find something better in Oregon.

One incident of the land hunger was the influx of pennies in Northern Idaho towns. The average Easterner is thrifty when away from home.

The 75-pound royal chinook caught in the Columbia at Vancouver should be kept on ice until President Taft gets here. It is about his size.

President Taft will take occasion while in Seattle to "run over" to Tacoma. This puts on Tacoma the official stamp as a tail-ender.

Have you noticed any reduction in the price of your groceries and meats and clothes and other things since the tariff was revised?

Given a good road with a house at the end in which to frivol, there is no hope for the automaniac and no end but the hospital.

Mr. Bryan will, of course, remain in Nebraska. They don't need any more Democrats in Texas.

"Not guilty" for smashing a receiver is a mighty bad precedent.

TWO CRIMES OF OUR CIVILIZATION.

One Masculine, Alcohol; the Other Feminine, Corsets.

Universalist Leader.

One is masculine and the other feminine, according to a writing in Le Figaro. Alcohol is the crime of man and the corset the crime of the woman. In this country we cannot draw the line so sharply as he seems to be able to do in France, for we are facing the serious problem of drinking women, though so far as we have known, no men, and only a few dudes, have taken to wearing corsets.

However, accepting the division, we are rather disposed to give heed to the remarks of this French observer, as sufficiently applicable to this land of ours to make interesting reading. After an appeal to women on artistic grounds for the preservation of the figure as the Creator made it, he says:

"Some women say, 'It is impossible for me to walk without corsets'; but this should be translated: 'The deformity which was imposed upon me from infancy is now acquired definitely. I am not a normal woman.' Just as the slave of alcohol says, 'I am ill when deprived of my beverage,' A good half of the feminine beings scattered over the globe walk without corsets. The compression of the waist was suggested to women neither by the desire to be more beautiful nor with a view to comfort. It was a suggestion as unforeseen, as stupid as the compression of their feet by the Chinese women or the dilation of the neck among the 'swells' of Padang. Do you know, madame, what is the height of fashion among the grand ladies of Padang? At the age of six an iron collar is fixed around the neck of the young girl; each succeeding year another collar is added, each being solidly riveted; little by little the intervertebral cartilages are distended, until in the adult the neck becomes as long as the face."

Then Mr. Prevost sums up the evils of corset wearing, and the twin evil of alcohol, and in answer to the question as to what is to be done, gets after them in this way: "Deal with them as with all plagues—with discretion, constraint and force; and force here means the law. Already laws for the regulation of the sale of alcohol have been devised. But laws against the corset—will any one dare to introduce such? In Bulgaria and Rumania girls are forbidden to wear corsets in the state schools; in Germany a similar prohibition exists for the female students in the gymnasia; in Russia the girl pupils of the lyceums and the high schols are required at entrance to discard "the cuirass which they wear under the name of corset . . . but in France an ordinance of the council of health forbidding the use of corsets during lessons in gymnastics is not executed, and, moreover, is not executable, for the very good reason that 'the habiliments of the young ladies do not admit of the discontinuance of the corset.'"

But he hopes that when women are convinced that the compression of the waist is more dangerous than the mutilation of the feet, as in China, they will call for a law to wipe out the feminine plague. And it is to be hoped also that the twin evil of the men, alcohol, may long since have been banished.

THE PROTECTIONIST VIEW.

With Presentation of a Number of Things to Be Thought On.

New York Evening Mail.

The country has accepted the protectionist principle more completely than at any previous period of our National history. No headway has been made by those who have sporadically attempted to revive the old free-trade or tariff-for-revenue-only feeling. It was made sufficiently clear at the extra session that the South has become at heart protectionist. Senator Daniels of Virginia openly repudiated the platform of his party, and instead of being punished has been rewarded by a unanimous renomination. On critical rollcalls more than half of the Southern Senators voted for higher duties, and there is no evidence that their conduct is unsatisfactory to their constituents. With free-tradeism languishing in the North and protection sentiment growing in the South protectionism seems unassailable. It is true that in certain states of the Mississippi Valley there is an apparent drift toward lowering the tariff, but with the East, the South, the Mountain states, and the Pacific Coast against them it is difficult to see how their propaganda, even if persisted in, can make much progress.

It is clear that the tariff problem is no longer the principal political preoccupation of the American people. There is an unusual amount of indifference as to whether duties are to be high or low. The campaigners on both sides discovered this during this Summer's agitation. No excitement could be worked up by either side. Business men and manufacturers refused to become excited when told that they were about to be ruined; consumers remained calm when it was advertised to them that if they did not vigorously protest they would be robbed. This quiescence is largely traceable to the fact that attention is now concentrated on questions which but indirectly involve the tariff—on social problems having to do more with the equitable distribution of wealth than the conditions of its production. A hundred heads are puzzling over what is to be done with respect to the corporations and the combinations to one devoting itself to pondering over customs duties. The American people are so constituted that they can think of but one thing at a time, and the rise of the new issue has displaced the old.

MANY USELESS FRENCH WAR SHIPS

$5,000,000 Will Be Saved by Striking Off 150 Unseaworthy Hulks.

New York Times.

The superior council of the marine has proposed striking at least 150 vessels off the list of the French navy, which cost the government nearly $5,000,000 annually. Of the 18 first-class battleships, so classified at the beginning of 1907, only seven possess anything like their full fighting efficiency. Those of the Bouvet and St. Louis class and the Brennus, 20 years old, are counted "only to make up the number."

The second-class vessels may be said to exist only on paper, for five of the nine in the navy list are devoted to the purposes of barracks and schools, and as such entail a heavy expenditure for upkeep. Other "paper" vessels are seven armored cruisers "of the first-class," of the Gueydon and Glorie types, which are insufficiently armed, while all the ships of the duplex type are out of date. Among the second-class cruisers only five out of the 27 are worthy to be retained in the service as school ships.

All the boats classed as coast guard are not worth their upkeep. Among the torpedo destroyers only 12 satisfy modern requirements, and 25 out of 201 torpedoboats are ready for the scrap heap.

Not the Same Old Prosperity.

New York Post.

Prosperity is coming, but it will not be the old prosperity.

We refer not to its outward form or bulk or duration, but to its spirit. The enlarged business which is before us, the new displays of energy, the further growth and achievements of capital fruitfully employed in corporations and otherwise, will be marked by other methods. We shall not easily drop back into the old style of conducting the great business of the country. It is necessary and timely to dwell upon this, because many have been persuading themselves that the excitements, the reforms, the painful inches of progress gained in the last few years, were all to go for nothing and that we should settle back with swinish complacency into the mire where we formerly wallowed.

CRITICISES BANKBOOK CARTOON.

One Appreciative Reader Takes Issue With The Oregonian and Dr. Eliot.

GOLDENDALE, Wash., Aug. 5.—(To the Editor.)—Permit me to take exception to the cartoon in today's Oregonian, representing the "Bank Book—the One Best Book." As a random stroke of wit, it is all right, but the readers of The Oregonian take it too seriously, for this to pass without some notation. They look to The Oregonian for philosophy and religion, as well as news and politics, hence it behooves you to treat in not too wanton manner the grave subjects you dispose of by cartoon and editorial. Allow me to add gratuitously that, although not always is it the reflection of the "naked truth" which you conjure up from the bottom of the well, yet I know of no institution taken by and large in the locality to which it belongs more deserving this high reputation than The Oregonian.

I am myself something of a materialist and a "practical man,", yet I know (and I hope that you agree with me, and that this cartoon is something of an inadvertence) that there is all too much skepticism already of all values outside the grossly material ones represented by the bank book. Money can buy everything necessary to life, and to make that life illustrious, except personal qualities. These it cannot buy. Oftener it is a hindrance to their acquirement. One generation develops the qualities capable of creating, if nothing better, wealth; the next generation dissipates the wealth and the personal qualities. Many a bank book is put to the poor use of nourishing in a vicious way a worthless life.

The point of your shaft would not be so wicked, were it not for the comparison raised by the words "it's the one best book."

I know that the revulsion from too much mental absorption and introspection sometimes impels one impatiently to fly from all books and ideality. And given the proper niche in personal action. It is a wholesome impulse. Life is better than books in the abstract. Yet in the concrete, how unsatisfactory to most of us is life, and unconsecrated by any ideas outside the bankbook, to all. So we fly again to ideals and search for them in books. And to man, generically speaking, there must be a better book than either your cartoonist or Dr. Eliot has offered us.

The good doctor, I must say, appears to me an incorrigible pedant. The books he mentions I have already forgoten, except "Walton's Compleat Angler," but I retain the impression that they were "cissy" and "granny" books. The doctor appears to be a faddist seeking novel rather than valuable impressions.

One does not have to be a highly cultured man, either in ethics or literature, to know that the marvelous elucidation of the human soul given us by Shakespeare, nor the all but infinite foundations for the development of a science of morality contained in the concepts of Jesus, have not yet been surpassed—so whatever the five-foot shelf contains, these must be there, however well they may have been "already read." In these are best expressed those axioms, which must appear in the foundation of the integral structure of all culture.

Man's best book will teach him the knowledge that makes him paramount to life, using it as a creator rather than a slave. If not "Captain of his Fate," at least captain of his life within sufficient limits, his life belongs to Him. He is a free agent; and without some better book, the bank book is only a beggar's letter of credit, the cheap and wheedling instrument of cheap and sordid lives. "What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

B. F. MATSON.

SITE FOR THE NEW CITY JAIL.

Economy and Common Sense Point to Fourth and Jefferson Streets.

PORTLAND, Aug. 5.—(To the Editor.)—For the past three weeks several articles have appeared at different times in the daily papers as to the best location for the new City Jail. Naturally, those who have sincerely at heart the best interests of the city are decidedly opposed to the location at Park and Everett streets—a quarter of the city which appeals to the citizens of Portland in the way that it should certainly be protected from an unnecessary invasion of this kind—set aside, as it is, and maintained by the city as a small park, a recreation spot and playground for our young people. Looking at the matter in this light, and entirely disinterested, what motive could possibly prompt the committee in selecting this location, and trying to foist it upon the Council, directly against the best interests of the City of Portland, its citizens and those directly concerned? The city and county, in a business way, are identical. By grouping the civic buildings near together, better results are obtained, not only in time saved to those who have business with the different civic departments, but in economy — a great saving to the city treasury.

A very desirable quarter block, diagonally across from the City Hall, situated on the southeast corner of Fourth and Jefferson streets—a logical and ideal location—was tendered by the owners some three weeks ago to Mayor Simon for $45,000. This is a reasonable and clean proposition, and at that time appealed to the Mayor. As stated through the columns of the press, he trusted the site would be accepted and passed on favorably by the Council, as the location in every way appealed to his idea of the best interests of the city, and would certainly meet with his support.

This site is still available—no change in price or conditions, and I think I am safe in saying there is no change in the Mayor's views, although the many articles that have appeared to the contrary in the evening papers have made it appear that he is strongly in favor of the location at Park and Everett. He is simply deferring to the wishes of the committee, who had selected this site, through his natural courtesy, not wishing to force his choice upon them, although feeling that, in the interests of the city, the location in every way would be far better at Fourth and Jefferson streets. Mayor Simon's choice needs no explanation or defense at my hands, but, knowing the inside facts, it is only simply justice that others should know them as well. TAXPAYER.

One on Uncle Joe.

Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

On his trips to New York Uncle Joe usually stops at the Hotel Astor. Recently while in New York he took a room at the Knickerbocker. After walking up and down Broadway in the glare of the white lights for an hour or two the Speaker decided to retire and walked into the Astor. When the clerk asked him to register Uncle Joe nonchalantly announced that he had already registered. A search was made by those behind the desks, but it was unavailing. Firmly the clerk, who didn't happen to recognize his distinguished visitor, even after he had told him his name, informed Mr. Cannon that he was mistaken—that he hadn't registered. Uncle Joe can say things on occasion, and this was an occasion. He indulged in some very naughty language.

"Dem your hotel, I'll go to the Knickerbocker," he said. "Gimme my grip."

The word Knickerbocker arrested his thought and his free flow of language. Uncle Joe come to. Then he explained to the clerk and wandered out into the night.

"Damned if I ain't getting old and forgetful," he murmured as the turnstile door swung behind him.

In the City Office.

London Opinion.

"Did you write this report on my lecture, 'The Curse of Whisky?'"

"Yes, madam."

"Then kindly explain what you mean by saying, 'The lecturer was evidently full of her subject?'"

COULD NOT STAND PROSPERITY.

Career of Edward Hugh Martin Discussed by Magazine Writer.

John Elfreth Watkins, in the current number of the Scrap Book Magazine, writing of lime-light victims who, once past the zenith of their fame, could not endure oblivion, refers to Edward Hugh Martin, the ex-Army officer, who is in jail in Portland, having been convicted of manslaughter in connection with the murder of Nathan Wolff, a pawnbroker. His reference to Martin follows:

The limelight, like the X-ray, is too often fatal to those suddenly exposed to its full glare. Those who survive it best have approached it slowly. The careful mother accustoms the eyes of her newly born babe but gradually to the light of day; and men who have been long imprisoned underground must be blindfolded when first brought into the sunlight, or darkness will be theirs forever.

So it is with the too-often fatal flame of fame. Its calcium glare must be turned upon us gradually, or, like the moth, we will pitch headlong into its fire and singe the wings upon which we have soared gloriously above obscurity. It is not the fault of the victim when the limelight blinds him and burns out his soul. He is as much the prey of fickle fate as the victim of an earthquake or tidal wave.

The limelight of the Spanish War also had its victims, although some of its more famous ones were merely scorched and managed to recover. But among those who failed to survive was the brave Lieutenant Ed. Martin, of the regulars.

Possesser of wealth and family, he went to West Point, where he stood so high among his fellows that when the war broke out he was given his commission ahead of time and sent to the front. Then came the war extras, with graphic descriptions of his magnificent bravery during the charge up San Juan Hill, when he bore two wounded comrades to safety under the very guns of the Spaniards.

At the close of the war, as a special mark of recognition, he was transferred to that much-coveted army-post, Fort Hamilton, New York.

Millionaires deemed it an honor to wine and dine him. He was showered with favors, decorated with medals of heroism, feted and toasted by society and officialdom, from one end of the metropolis to the other. Then, amid the plaudits of society, he became engaged to one of the wealthy belles of the fashionable world.

But this overmuch hero-worship turned his head. He started in upon the Great White Way at a pace which alarmed his friends, and one day society was shocked to read that he had married the notorious keeper of a poolroom—a woman known as "Gussie, the Poolroom Queen."

A month later, army inspectors found his accounts overdrawn. Court-martialed and dismissed from the service and then divorced by his wife, he took to morphine and went to the penitentiary for forgery. Free again, he was arrested for burglary. Then he married again, and his family sent him West with money to start life anew. But a bank in which he deposited his money failed, and in a little over a year he turned up in police annals again, charged with the killing of a pawnbroker in Portland, Or.

A STUDY IN EXTRAVAGANCE.

But Portland's Debt, in Proportion, Is Greater Than Some of These.

New York World.

The Wall Street Journal publishes this table showing the increase of municipal debt in ten years in the 12 largest cities of the United States:

Cities.	Net debt 1909.	Jan. 1 1899.	Debt per cap. 1908.	1898.
N. Y. ...	$672,019,344	$344,220,455	156.82	68.79
Chicago..	24,844,600	15,104,696	8.73	7.74
Phil. ..	79,635,020	36,280,082	63.40	29.53
St. Louis	19,966,000	13,942,278	26.48	26.50
Boston ..	74,099,288	55,084,172	122.01	109.31
Balt. ...	22,107,048	12,408,434	39.67	23.65
Cleve'd.	22,867,077	8,129,008	42.88	20.34
San Fr..	3,787,725	68,105	9.40	5.19
Cincin...	29,242,907	25,169,532	68.81	65.37
Buffalo..	13,258,853	11,286,897	33.14	29.70
Pittsburg	12,118,967	9,172,956	30.29	30.57
New Or..	26,126,600	14,009,127	74.64	50.04

New York's debt is not only greater in proportion to its population and its taxable wealth than that of any other city in the list, but in ten years its debt has grown three times faster proportionately than that of any other city, in spite of a more liberal reckoning of net debt under the rule excluding water bonds.

Chicago's low debt is due to constitutional restriction and to its low ratio of assessment. It was because of these restrictions that the city, instead of buying and operating its streetcars, made its recent arrangement with a private holding corporation.

Grave concern is expressed in England because of a similar expansion of city debt, resulting usually from taking over streetcars, gas and electric light works and other utilities, the wisdom of which policy is still a matter of dispute. Only to a small extent have the American cities even this excuse of increasing debt. Their vast bond issues are a source of legitimate concern; especially do those of the metropolis justify the Journal's charge of "sheer reckless extravagance."

REINCARNATION.

The Doctrine Put to "Live" Use by a Recent Writer.

New York Evening Post.

The doctrine of reincarnation is put to some really live use as they would say in Chicago, by a writer in the Red Book Magazine. By aid of a crystal and a few hypnotic passes he discovers the ancient embodiments of three prominent men of our own day. Mr. Roosevelt, 2000 years ago, conquered Gaul, defeated Pompey, and was slain by Brutus after producing a number of historical works in a style remarkable for vigor and terseness. William J. Bryan about 100 years before Caesar led the Roman common people against the money power. He was Tiberius Gracchus, and he had against him—a really clever touch—"the party of the Optimists, the great party of Everything-Is-All-Right-As-It-Is." "We will stand pat," was their battle cry. And John D. Rockefeller was Midas, of course. "Golf was not invented then." The first parallel is really startling: "At 31 Caesar was appointed a collector of customs; at the same age his reincarnation became civil service commissioner. At the age of 40 Caesar was still a mere tyro. At 40 Roosevelt was still untried. In that year of his age Caesar went before the people as a candidate for Pontifex Maximus of Rome and Roosevelt ran for Governor of New York. Both were triumphantly elected, and both were, as the historian remarks of the first, hotly opposed by certain Senators and others of the most eminent men of the state. Three years went by and Caesar was chosen pro-consul of the Roman Republic; Roosevelt, in the same year of his age, became President of the United States. And from the start, in both these incarnations, the strenuous soul was engaged in tremendous rows with the Senate."

An Important Discovery.

Philadelphia Press.

"Senators, Representatives and others" at Washington seem to be discovering that a man may weigh 300 pounds, have a broad, good-natured smile and be a good mixer, and yet have a will of his own, which stays set against any odds.

Shortage of White Paper.

New York Herald.

Consensus of opinion of the committee of the Actors' Society formed to read plays is that six out of 250 are worth trying out. It is now clear why there is a shortage of white paper.

Should Have Stuck to Prayer.

Corvallis Gazette.

The evidence is that Colonel Hofer is better at prayer than argumentation. He prayed for rain and a few drops fell, but he argued for the purchase of Fairmount Park (Salem) and the voters at a special election Monday turned him down.