

The Oregonian

Entered at Portland, Oregon, Postoffice as Second-Class Matter. Subscription Rates—Invariably in Advance.

Portland, Monday, Nov. 22, 1909.

THE CIRCULATION OF THE OREGONIAN.

It required 14,000 pounds of paper to carry yesterday's issue of the Oregonian—the usual Sunday edition—of 27 tons. The issue was 55,000 copies, and not 200 copies were left over at 5 o'clock.

THE RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH.

Free speech is a talismanic phrase. Chiefest of personal rights is the right to speak and to write freely. Milton, in his famous Areopagitica, pleaded first among all rights that men enjoy, the right to use free speech and free writing and printing to the injury of others.

What is contended for at Spokane, and what is contended for by the Gompers people, is the right to use speech and writing for injury of others. Not only have private individuals rights that must be protected against wanton attack by speech or press, but the public has a right to insist that the streets or highways shall not be blockaded by crowds gathered to listen to harangues from speakers who talk, they have messages of one sort or another to deliver.

The right to attack a lawful business, by speech or print, for the purpose of injury, is not a right at all. That it should be claimed as a right is extraordinary. An effort in the Sixtieth Congress failed, and it then was threatened by Mr. Gompers and his associates, that they would "make it an issue" in the elections of 1908. They indeed did this in this direction; but the effort was a dismal failure. The Gompers "remedy" was offered in a bill (called the Pearce bill) which proposed to enact into law the doctrine that "no right to carry on business of any particular kind, or at any particular place, or at all, shall be construed to be a franchise, or treated as a property, or as constituting a property right."

PREVENTABLE DISEASES.

Statistics of vitality (and mortality) seem to show that the infant today has in prospect a much longer average lifetime than did the baby of two generations ago; but a man 60 years old has in prospect an average after-life no greater than formerly. A recent bulletin, issued by the Committee of One Hundred on National Health (New Haven), shows that the proximate cause of this contrast would seem to lie in the fact that the mortality from many of the diseases of later life is on the increase. The death rates from diabetes, heart disease and Bright's disease have all doubled. Yet one cause of this apparent consequence may lie in the facts that use of automobiles now are much fuller and more accurate than formerly.

It is known that the death rate in the United States from tuberculosis equals the combined death rate from smallpox, typhoid fever, diphtheria, cancer, diabetes, appendicitis and meningitis. Yet tuberculosis is, in a large degree, a preventable disease. Equal in the number of its victims is pneumonia, largely preventable also. Pneumonia is now known to be a communicable disease, the germ of which is very widely distributed.

Smallpox has proven the chief prophylactic. Presently the death rate from smallpox per 100,000 population was twenty-four and four-tenths in the period from 1846-1870. In 1874 vaccination, which up to that time had been only intermittently utilized, was made compulsory, and the death rate per 100,000 fell at once to one and five-tenths.

THE KANSAS HEN.

It is accordingly with considerable surprise that we find the Sunflower State again on the front page with a real Kansas story, bearing some of the earmarks of the old-time "whisky-in-the-tea" thrillers. This particular story comes from Topeka, and it tells of an egg laid by a Republic County hen, imbedded in the shell of this egg were ominous characters which spelled out "Drought 1911."

NO PARDON BOARD NEEDED.

Oregon has some fifty boards and commissions to carry on its affairs of state government. They are surely enough. But now comes a proposal for yet another—to assume the pardon duties now performed by the executive. This board, it is said, would take from the executive's shoulders the distressing cares that the law creates for punishment of criminals.

THE CORPORATION TAX.

"Is the Federal Corporation Tax Constitutional?" is the title of an article in the latest number of The Outlook, by Charles W. Pierson, of the New York bar. The subject is examined in the light of the constitution, by highest authority on questions that lie on the dividing line between the functions of the states and of the United States.

A NON-PARTISAN ABSURDITY.

"Non-political judiciary" is the demagogic shout of partisan Democrats in Oregon, their half-shell Republican allies and their newspaper organs. Yet when their man Chamberlain, as Governor, named the two new unconstitutional members of the Supreme Court last Winter, he appointed Democrats.

THE KANSAS HEN.

"And they all take whiskey in their tea in Kansas," sang a tuncful bard of the vaudeville stage some years ago, when "Kansas" was a name with which to conjure. The reason for that pointed assertion regarding the beverage of the Kansas has never been quite clear, but it seems to have been a deduction made from the conduct of Kansas before William Allen White made that famous diagnosis of "What's the matter with Kansas?" About that time Kansas had a great reputation for production of freaks of all kinds, including sockless statemen.

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THE BRITISH BUDGET.

Will the House of Lords fight or surrender? That is the one question which is stirring England today. The Budget which has kept Parliament at a white heat for six months, without a thought of the usual midsummer holidays, has passed the House of Commons by an unexpected majority—379 to 149. Debate on it will begin in the House of Lords on November 22.

RELIEF FOR THE SUPREME COURT.

Suggestion to Limit Appeals and Appoint Circuit Court Arbitrators. CROY, Or., Nov. 20.—(To the Editor.)—I desire to commend the Oregonian's editorial on the subject of relieving the Supreme Bench by the appointment of arbitrators to the Circuit Court.

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