

The Oregonian

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Portland, Thursday, Nov. 25, 1909.

English Land Tax and Our Own.

In Great Britain the class of privilege and land-holding possesses advantages unknown in America. Conditions are so different in the two countries that the means used in one are not at all the equivalents of terms used in the other.

To the American mind, resistance of this method and system of just taxation in the United Kingdom is strange, and the motive inconceivable. But the motive is the key.

Think how dull the Lord might have made the world if he had wished. Lead-colored, purple, violet, without fragrance, trees with ash-hued leaves instead of green, these were all possible when the earth was created.

In our country the proprietor of the land is charged with payment of taxes, on its increasing valuations, every year. Substantially, this is what is proposed by the English system.

Disparity of conditions makes close analogies between the systems in England and the United States impossible. Our land-owners are assessed, and must pay every year, on the ground value of their land.

A knotty point in the proposed English land tax is the "site value." It is to be arrived at by taking the actual price paid for land in the case of a sale, the calculated value in the case of a lease or transfer on death, and the hypothetical value (if sold in the open market) in case of "Commissioners' sales."

It makes a problem of vast and varied complication; but clearly it is an effort to preserve the equitable and just rights of the owner, while defining anew his obligations to the state.

The question before the British Parliament is this, namely: Whether taxation should be borne by proprietors of the land, who are those best able to bear it, or by those who can least afford to pay.

Ugly rumors are in circulation regarding the burning of the steamer It. It seems inconceivable that the lives of human beings should be imperiled in furtherance of an insurance fraud.

insured steamer in the Columbia River after the crew were safely ashore is a serious matter, but if there is any foundation for the rumors now circulated regarding the It. Crook, some one is entitled to a good, long term in the Penitentiary.

The Greatest Present Need.

The true way to make Portland the city beautiful, as well as the city useful, is to pave the streets. This coming year should witness a degree of energy in this direction never seen in Portland heretofore.

During the rainy season, now upon us, much can be done, beyond the necessary estimates and preparations; but with cessation of the rains improvement of the streets should be pushed and enforced, as never before.

Most owners of property doubtless will co-operate; those unwilling will be compelled to pass miles and miles of streets that are practically impassable. Most of these are new streets, but some of the older ones are in equal need of attention.

Thanksgiving. Think how dull the Lord might have made the world if he had wished. Lead-colored, purple, violet, without fragrance, trees with ash-hued leaves instead of green, these were all possible when the earth was created.

In all generations there have been messengers who pulled as hard as they could against the forward striving of the Almighty; but they never succeeded in their task.

The Oregon apple has carried the fame of the Beaver State around the world. Together with the unequalled reputation it has made has appeared some misapprehensions.

The imperfect knowledge of the conditions which have made world's prizewinners of Oregon apples is not confined to foreigners.

With the English budget holding the center of the stage as it does at the present time, the House of Lords might find very little to be thankful for this week, even if the holidays were celebrated in England, as it is in this country.

The person who brought all this rain weather must have been powerful strong with the prayers.

Before we are done with turkey hash some of us may be thankful turkey was not cheaper.

that poverty, drunkenness, the tophet of lost women, must be with us all ways. They have attacked these terrible things with the resolve to delve to their causes and find their cure.

Rejecting the Baby Act.

The Chicago Board of Trade has rejected the "anti-corner" amendment to its rules, and as a result the gamblers who sell commodities which they do not own, and buy what they do not expect to accept delivery on, must live up to their contracts.

The same advantages are noticeable in cotton future dealing. Under the system of buying and selling futures, a manufacturer, without the purchase of a vast amount of stock, can arrange his purchases in advance.

The new Mayor of San Francisco seems to be handing out some pleasant surprises for those who expected him to turn the town over to the old union and labor community.

Ninety million tons of coal were consumed by the locomotives on American railroads last year, according to Professor Goss, of the University of California.

The experts, on the trial of Alma Bell, testified that when she shot her recreant lover, she had no sense of right and wrong, and she was acquitted. Very well; but the judgment of men and women in general will be that she had a keen sense of the wrong—of the wrong she had suffered.

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If Portland's milk is not the best in the United States, the fault is not with the city's water.

After all, this warm-weather food is better than burst pipes and the plumber.

flavor, color and style is not found in New England. In no other part of the country than in the Pacific Northwest can be found those admirable climatic conditions resulting from the commingling of the tempering blowing inland from the warm Japan current, with the cooling breeze that come down from the snowcapped mountains that stand like sentinels looking down on thousands of acres of the finest orchards on earth.

FOR A MERCHANT MARINE.

Frank Waterhouse, of Seattle, one of the most prominent shipping men on the Pacific Coast, in response to queries as to the best means of securing a merchant marine, has written a letter which appeared in the Seattle Times. In part Mr. Waterhouse's views were as follows:

In answer to these inquiries, I have stated that Congress should pass a bill enabling the registration under the American flag of foreign-built vessels, adopting in some manner equalizing the differences in the wage scale expected to apply for vessels, for use in the trades in which we are interested.

On account of the enormous difference in the cost of foreign-built and American-built vessels, with the corresponding increase in the items of depreciation, interest and insurance per annum, between these two classes of vessels, the increased cost of operation under the American flag, in other respects, the United States would never seriously consider a subsidy bill, the appropriations for which would be large enough to equalize the above-mentioned differences.

For instance, the American steamers of the Pacific coast, which, up to recently, were operated in our Oriental service, cost ready for work about \$1,200,000 each, and were carried at a cost of \$1,000,000 per month, and made an average speed of about 10 1/2 knots per hour, on a consumption of about 90 tons of coal per day.

The President Taft now faces the duty of selecting several new generals for the Army, and the promotion of Brigadier-General Winfield S. Edgerly, and early in January of Brigadier-General John G. D. Knight, whose promotion to that rank takes place today because of the retirement of Major-General Westcott.

Mr. Taft has already given evidence that he is looking for good men who are seniors in their grades for advancement. William H. Carter, the senior Brigadier-General in the Army, and he made Colonel Marion P. Maus, of the Twentieth Infantry, an excellent officer, Brigadier-General, last June. He also retained a deserving officer of long service when he made Colonel R. T. Yeatman, Eleventh Infantry, Brigadier-General, for purposes of retirement shortly thereafter.

It was a good thing that the President also chose a highly meritorious officer, Senior Colonel in the Corps of Engineers, whose work in this branch of the Service has long been known both in and out of the Army.

So far so good, the Army says. If this keeps up there will be nothing to brag of. For the question is not only as to the vacancies created by the retirement of Generals Edgerly and Knight, but those made by the retirement of March 13 next, of Brigadier-General Morton and on November 14 next of Brigadier-General A. L. Myer. If Mr. Taft follows his precedent of last year in designating the men who will succeed in these various positions, there is also an important department, Brigadier-General, to bestow, in that General Major, the chief of engineers, will go on the retired list for age on June 11, it is undeniable that in the list of Colonels there is plenty of good material to choose from, particularly in the cavalry.

The Empire of Texas. Houston Post. Says the Birmingham Age-Herald: "Mr. Taft is our President as much as he is the President of Iowa or Vermont."

Converts by Previous Conversion. BAKER CITY, Or., Nov. 24.—(To the Editor.)—Referring to the 1000 Dan Shannon "converts" in Baker City mentioned in your editorial, the most of them were already church-going, and were called to make public profession of their faith and Shannon called them "converts."

BROTHER CLINE AGAIN.

Portland, Nov. 24.—(To the Editor.)—Notes on Prohibition. In last Tuesday issue of the Oregonian, occasioned by the fact that a paper of the character of the Oregonian should be trying to make it appear that the recent tragedy at Lebanon, and the loss of trade at Pendleton, are directly chargeable to prohibition of the saloons. This will hardly justify the conviction of even the Oregonian's many friends that the value has been their so obstinate and has proved its lawlessness to such an extent that nothing but a complete adoption of Prohibition by licensing the saloons is not likely to bring about the prohibition of the saloons. When a large proportion of crime in the state is traceable to the saloons, it is any wonder that the friends of law and good order should want it abolished.

The Oregonian did not assert, nor intimate, that the recent tragedy at Lebanon was chargeable to prohibition. It said that prohibition did not stop a sale of liquors and prevent such tragedies. As to municipal revenue, cut off by prohibition, undoubtedly the loss of revenue can be borne, but it will fall on property by direct tax; while surreptitious sale of liquors will still yield more abuses than open and regulated sale. Any people seem to think that when they have abolished the saloons the problem as to liquor will be solved. It is a mistake, confirmed amply by experience wherever prohibition has been attempted. As to the last question, about connection of this subject with revenue and taxpaying. We think it demonstrable that only a small proportion of the taxes of the cities and towns, where prohibition raises the municipal question, is paid by prohibitionists.

The Oregonian thinks they will not, on mature consideration, wish to do so. Probably they would not be able to do so. Undoubtedly, also, many who would cast their votes for local prohibition (through local option) will not wish to vote for a state prohibition law.

BOOMING OREGON.

No Likelihood that the Work Will Be Overdone. Polk County Observer. Often you hear it said of some rapidly growing city or town that it is being "overdone." Such expressions of opinion usually come from individuals who are not noted for their booming and boosting qualities, and who are not in the habit of visiting other cities in other parts of the State.

It has been said that Eugene is an overdone town, and that its population is being doubled in three years and has more modern business buildings and more miles of paved streets than any other town in Oregon. It is true, it is true, but it is also true that Eugene is not overdone, and that its population is being doubled in three years and has more modern business buildings and more miles of paved streets than any other town in Oregon.

How's Philosophy. Atchison Globe. It is fortunate that not all people suffer from the same philosophy. Every man is a reformer until reform tramps on his toes. Then how his yell.

When a man talks five minutes over the telephone, he says "All right" ten times. A woman will say "Well" that often.

Procession of 41 Lawyers. New York World. The \$200,000 estate left by Daniel C. Kingsland, a real estate operator, is to be distributed among his nephews and nieces. Some of it will go to the half hundred lawyers who represented the various classes of engineers, will go on the retired list for age on June 11, it is undeniable that in the list of Colonels there is plenty of good material to choose from, particularly in the cavalry.

How many attorneys are interested in this motion?" asked the court. "There are," thought the man I present this morning," replied Attorney William R. Wilder, a spokesman. "There are more of us when we gather in force."

Drugs Used on Plants. Philadelphia Bulletin. One of the strangest gardens in the world is on the roof of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy. A horticulturist is experimenting with the use of drugs on plants in order to find out whether it is possible to grow under glass plants from which rare drugs are taken.

A Vital Question. Louisville Courier-Journal. "We start with a capital stock of \$2,000,000" inquired the first promoter. "We do," said the second promoter. "One more question." "Ask as many as you like." "Have you enough of this capital stock paid in to take us to lunch?"

ECHO FROM THE LONG-AGO OREGON.

Death of Mrs. Clarke, at Montreal, Aged 105. MONTREAL, Nov. 20.—(To the Editor.)—I think you will be interested in the enclosed clipping. Mr. Clarke, the husband of the woman who has just died, caused our Oregon country a great deal of trouble, as he was the bearer of the silver cup that old John Jacob Astor sent out to Alexander McKay, but McKay having been killed on the Tonquin, Clarke brought it back across the continent, and while in the Palouse country it was stolen and Clarke handed the Nez Perce who stole it.

This silver cup is now in Montreal and owned by Alexander McKay's descendants, but not direct line, a mother's grandchild. I have seen this cup and held it in my hand. The present owner brought it from the Trust Company to show it to me. The inscription is: "From John Jacob Astor to his friend Alexander McKay, 1811."

The clipping follows: Mrs. John Clarke died yesterday at the age of 105 years, and retained her full faculties to the last. To have been born many years before Queen Victoria, to have lived in the reigns of five British sovereigns, to remember the battle of Waterloo, and to still be in possession of her faculties—such was her wonderful life record.

Mrs. Clarke was the wife of that John Clarke associated in the early days of fur trading with John Jacob Astor, who was one of the earliest explorers of the country beyond the Rocky Mountains, for many years was a leading figure in the affairs of the Hudson Bay Company, and who is referred to in Washington Irving's "Astoria."

For nearly a century Mrs. Clarke has been identified with the growth and development of Canada and in remote corners of what is now the great Dominion has played her part in empire building. She was born in 1804, at the age of 71 years.

The next great event in the life of the girl who was to have a hand in the rearing of a great empire, was the battle of Waterloo, and at the age of 17 Mrs. Clarke, who can hear the rattle of the iron shuffles of the house as the Prussian troops poured through the town; and for a week things were disturbed until the British soldiers.

When she was still early in her teens, John Clarke, the Canadian explorer and Hudson Bay factor, and son of Simon Clarke, of what is now Vermont, went to Paris at the suggestion of John Jacob Astor, and wandered as far as Switzerland. There he met his future wife, and a short time after he had returned home, he and his parents followed him to Canada.

To a girl fresh from Europe even Montreal seemed the end of the earth. Shortly after the marriage, Mr. Clarke took his wife to the Northwest, her parents accompanying them. While in the Northwest Mrs. Clarke took part in the first missionary service ever held in that region, and was the first Anglican missionary to the Northwest. Rev. Mr. West, and led the singing of the first hymn. The family still possessed the Bible presented by the missionary in the Northwest, and which was given to Mrs. Clarke as a memento of the occasion.

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Invents Cable Quadruplex. Stockbridge (Mass.) Dispatch to New York Herald. Stephen D. Field, a nephew of Cyrus West Field, who laid the first Atlantic cable, has been successful in his laboratory here by the use of which four messages can be sent over a single cable simultaneously.

NO TIME FOR PENITENCE. Is "Life a bubble?" An hour of pain. An hour of joy. So much misery. And death of sin. Yes, Life's worth while—The day that's left—The dawn that blooms—The rising sun—The snake room—For smile on smile.