

The Oregonian

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Portland, Friday, Dec. 10, 1909.

BRITAIN'S POLITICAL STRUGGLE.

Does anyone suppose the British electorate really wishes to suppress the House of Lords? If any think so, they have but to wait for the disillusionment. Even if the coming election should go against the House of Lords, neither its position nor its power will be seriously affected.

The key is found in the adherence of all the people to representative government, with the House of Lords acting as a check—but only as a temporary check if the people are earnest in radical measures. Such check exists, in a degree, in our Senate. The misfortune is that our Senate hasn't the respect among our people that the House of Lords has in Britain.

Of course, we could have nothing of our country like the British House in our country. It would be suited to all us; yet it will do for illustrations and for contrasts, in our own political action.

Undeniably the programme of the Commons is in the direction of state socialism, as conducted by the Lords. Neither party can triumph completely. Yet the contest is one of intense interest to all people, the world over, who watch the struggle in a country where opinion is free, between those who are advanced and those who are conservative, and those who resist it. In our country the problem is essentially the same—though presented in wholly different phases.

DR. COOK AND HIS PRETENSIONS.

"The darkness deepens" about Dr. Cook. Men having actual knowledge of Arctic conditions have belittled him but little. Few in New York or in London have had faith in him at all. It is the common opinion that his stories, both as to Mt. McKinley and the journey to the Pole, are fabrications. As new incidents, seemingly subjecting the journey to examination, usually coming to light. Two men appear who confess they were principals in the fabrication of his astronomical and other observations for submission to the University of Copenhagen.

It is all but incredible that any man should attempt a fabrication of this description. Even yet, it is well to wait for the final judgment of those competent to express an opinion on the data and details furnished by Dr. Cook. If they are actually fraudulent, no ingenuity can disguise them, or protect him from the scorn of the world.

These statements by men who profess to have made up Cook's "calculations" for him, follow hard upon the remarks by Professor H. C. Parker of Columbia University, on Cook's alleged ascent of Mt. McKinley. Professor Parker accompanied Dr. Cook on the Mt. McKinley expedition, and declares it impossible to believe that Cook had reached the summit. Cook, he says, "knew nothing of mountain climbing, had no scientific training, and seemed to realize his total incompetence for such work." It appearing impossible to reach the top of the mountain in the manner in which Cook returned, and Cook remained behind, to "hunt a little," as he said and to "look over some of the nearest glaciers."

Parker's analysis of Cook's statements leaves the explorer in a pitiful position. By his barometer, Cook says, he found the height of the mountain to be 20,390 feet. But the highest barometer scale we had," says Parker, "was only 18,000 feet." Parker knew, because he was, in fact, in charge of the expedition. As to Cook's qualifications, Parker says that he very much doubts whether, if placed in the streets of New York, with the best instruments made, Dr. Cook could calculate his latitude and longitude with absolute accuracy.

DAIRYING IN OREGON.

The inspiring story of success which Mr. J. D. Mickle related at the State Dairyman's convention is not at all marvelous. It can be paralleled by the experience of many men who, like him, have escaped from a hard life and poor pay in the city to find health, liberty and fortune on a small farm. It is as much of a scientific calling as fruit-growing. It is strange that the people of this state have not found it more attractive. The returns are large, and yet Oregon is far from producing enough butter and cheese for home consumption.

very simple and comparatively cheap one. Clover grows almost everywhere west of the Cascades. Corn for ensilage is easily raised. Root crops thrive with moderate attention. But in spite of all these favorable conditions, dairying does not move forward in Oregon as it should. We ought to supply the home demand and produce a large surplus for export. Perhaps the numerous big estates in the Willamette Valley somewhat hinder men of small means from engaging in the dairy business. Certainly the retard orchardry. Very likely the exaggerated fear of tuberculosis has also been a deterrent. Oregon cattle breeders ought to pay some attention to developing a cow which can endure the climate better than the Jersey does. There is no reason why we should not produce a native breed which shall be at once profitable in the dairy and adapted to local conditions.

THE WATER-PIPE QUESTION.

When the proposition was before the city to require water pipes or mains of the diameter of ten inches or less to be laid at the expense of the owners of property directly benefited. The Oregonian supported it; for it seemed reasonable and right to require property held in large or considerable tracts for rise in values to pay the cost of laying water mains that were expected to increase the land values two to five fold. Question was, why the whole city should be taxed for the benefit of landholders and speculators about the suburbs.

It is found, however, we are told, that the plan is impracticable or unworkable. The main reason given is this, namely, that it is impossible to distribute the benefits, on any calculable system; hence, the assessments will be resisted, and contractors refuse to offer bids on the work. It is explained—or asserted—that it is a very different matter from apportionment of the cost of constructing a main or laying a street for the section or district served by improvements of this character is clearly ascertainable; but the water system of the city is a connected whole, and a main or large pipe laid in one locality may extend far into others; moreover, laterals or branches penetrate very far beyond the original section paid for by those to whom the cost of the stem was charged.

The objection is that contractors, knowing that payment will be resisted, make no tenders for the work; and the present situation, therefore, is a complete impasse. The theory that the property benefited should pay is sound, but the difficulty of defining and apportioning the benefits, on a continually changing basis, is an insuperable obstacle. Hence the standstill, and hence the call for a vote to change the conditions.

Further, the existing situation is an obstacle to street improvements. The supply mains should be laid down before the streets are paved; and it is sound economy to require this. But pavement of streets is blocked by the failure to get the water mains laid down.

SECRETARY WILSON'S BLUNDER.

Conclusive evidence is at hand showing that Secretary Wilson, on his recent investigation of Western forest reserves, visited but one comparatively insignificant reserve, in the extreme eastern part of Idaho. There were fifteen other reserves in Idaho, all of greater importance than the one which he visited, and the trip was made for the purpose of enabling the Secretary to obtain accurate knowledge of the entire forest reserve policy. It was on the information thus gained that Mr. Wilson so glibly announced in his report that there would be no more withdrawals from the forest reserves, thus indicating that millions of acres of ripe timber, now rapidly deteriorating, would remain uncut, to rot in these reserves.

To the Western people, who for years have had perfect knowledge of the worthlessness of the information diffused by the Department of Agriculture, it will not be surprising to learn that the Secretary of Agriculture has been caught in the act of "faking." By no gentler term is it possible to describe his act in visiting one insignificant forest reserve in an obscure part of Idaho and then announcing a nation-wide policy based on personal investigation of the forest reserves of the West. The best past performances of the Agricultural Department, regarding the Pacific Northwest, "faking" of this character might be expected. Far out in the "special agent" of the Department of Agriculture, whose duty it is to keep in touch with crop conditions, etc., in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Located several hundred miles from the wheat fields of these states, and apparently imbued with the belief that crop reporting is a branch of mathematics, this "special agent" annually sends forth crop reports that are weirdly grotesque and extravagantly ridiculous.

It should be remembered that the wild statement of this special agent a year ago made the wheat crop of the Washington and Idaho fully 15,000,000 bushels in excess of the actual output of the three states. This big "surplus" that never existed, was an important factor in swelling the crop of the Nation to extravagant figures, which enabled Mr. Patten and his friends who had accurate information,

to work one of the most profitable wheat deals ever attempted in the country. The fearfully and wonderfully constructed figures of this crop expert on the 1909 Oregon and Washington crop are not yet a hair's breadth from the Idaho crop at something over 13,000,000 bushels, or about 5,000,000 bushels in excess of the amount that can be located by the farmers, grain dealers or railroads. If the Oregon and Washington crop is similarly overestimated, the surplus of the United States on the Government report with about 100,000,000 bushels, which would be important if true. So far as the Pacific Northwest is concerned, it would be greatly to our advantage if Secretary Wilson would maintain a discreet silence on crops and forest reserves until he was in possession of accurate information regarding them.

MR. AYER'S LIBRARY REPORT.

That a public library, with branches in different parts of the city, will be maintained in Portland there can be no doubt, if a legitimate public effort and though the cost is considerable, it is not probable that any important and growing modern city will neglect the public library, or, having begun, will abandon it. And there is a fortunate combination between the old Library Association, maintained more than forty years by private citizens, and the effort of the city to make provision to meet this public demand. As a consequence of the contract between the city and the Library Association, a good many miles of road were built for about half that amount. The pressure of competition and the necessity for reducing the operating expenses is now so great, however, that enormous sums are spent in the straightening of curves and in reducing grades. The O. R. & N. has already expended large sums in straightening the line and reducing grades between Portland and The Dalles, and for a number of miles west of Pendleton. With the completion of the work now planned, the South Bank Road will be in perfect condition for any kind of competition which might be inaugurated by its great rival on the opposite side of the river.

A long letter in the Corvallis Gazette-Times—signed "E. M."—takes issue with the editor of that paper, who expressed the opinion that "one reason why The Oregonian is so widely read is its strong editorial page." Of course it does not become The Oregonian to quarrel with this dissenter. He doesn't understand The Oregonian, he can't understand it; and we should let it go at that;—only he proceeds thus:

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LET ABUTTING PROPERTY-PAY.

Why Should City Put Up for Extending Water Mains. PORTLAND, Or., Dec. 9.—(To the Editor.) I should like to express my opinion about the matter of the laying of water mains in this city, which is now being discussed by Mayor Simon and his Water Board. It is undoubtedly true that contractors are not anxious to bid on the work under present conditions. There are uncertainties about their ability to collect from individual property-owners. Mr. Simon believes that the work should be paid for out of the water fund, and that where I object. He and some members of the board evidently had this change in view at the time when they proposed to let abutting property pay (at a rate of 25 cents to 75 cents a month. While I do not want anything below cost, and think the minimum 25-cent rate is too low, can hardly see the justice or necessity of making the rate three times as high. I do not like to believe Mr. Simon possessed of any mercenary motives in this connection. He is a man of high character, no doubt many who have unimproved property, upon which they do not like to pay for laying water mains. Everyone knows that all improvements, such as water and sewers, enhance the value of vacant lots as much in proportion as they do to occupied land, and a new subdivision whenever a new residence goes up.

Therefore, I am not in favor of paying the cost of the water mains to the abutting property, but, in justice to him, and to induce him to bid on and do the work, can he not be paid for his work by the city, and the city collect from the property benefited by the improvement? That seems to me a fair and equitable arrangement, and that abutting property shall be protected.

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It is not possible that enemies of Dr. Cook, who are not inactive, may have engaged a man to impersonate Dr. Cook and then deal with Captain Loome and Mr. Dunkle? Is it reasonable to suppose that Dr. Cook, conscious of his every movement being watched, would at this late date attempt such a fraud? If the story published this morning is half way true, the only conclusion is that Dr. Cook has become insane. C. V. R.

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Evidently this correspondent has not lived seventeen years in Oregon, else he would not have been so sure to choose two Republicans and one Capital as Presidential electors. Of course, in a state where the majority or plurality is in the hands of one party, it would be split, but where the vote is very close, carelessness or personal feeling for or against one candidate may cause a split. It is not necessary to elect two parties in the past thirty-two years. For example, Hancock carried California in 1850 by a few hundred votes, but Judge Terry, one of the most conspicuous of our statesmen, was defeated because enough Democrats remembered his duel with Broderick many years before and would not vote for him. Maryland last year, and in 1901, the electoral vote was split.

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THE MODERN FARMER.

The old order changeth and the farmer is coming into his own. Not the farmer of the funny papers, with his patched jeans held up by one "gallus," driving a spavined team with a broken-down cart. This class of agriculturists is rapidly following the past, the great auk and other rare birds, to the dead and forgotten past. In his place has appeared a progressive, well-read, prosperous individual, who seldom gets beyond the reach of the telephone and the daily paper. The old system of haphazard farming has no attractions for this modern agriculturist, and he has reduced his calling to a business, with its lessons of adversity have aided in bringing about this change, but to the greatest extent it is due to the spread of good farming gospel, as taught in the agricultural colleges and demonstrated by the farmer's own example. With the elevation of his calling, the farmer is bringing about a remarkable social, economic and moral change. The change that has been wrought by the gospel of better farming is being taught forth in a bulletin dispatch, printed in yesterday's Oregonian, announcing the resignation of Professor George Severance, of the agricultural department of the Washington State College. Professor Severance was drawing the very satisfactory salary of \$2000 per year for his duties as instructor at the college, but has resigned to become a farmer. He is to take charge of three farms just beyond the boundary line in Canada, and is to receive a salary of \$3000 per year, with all of his expenses paid, and is also to have an interest in the profits. An automobile is provided for his use in running round his work on the farms and the position is about as desirable from that of the old-time farmer as any one will be imagined.

The case of this college farmer is not an exceptional one. The Oregon Agricultural College, as well as the Washington institution, is turning out large numbers of these modern farmers, and to their scientific knowledge and modern methods is due much of the credit for the vastly increased profits that have lifted mortgages and added automobiles, pianos and similar equipment to so many of the farms of the Pacific Northwest. The new farmer is one of the greatest benefactors that have come to the agricultural districts and as his success increases, as it surely will, the emoluments of the calling will excite the envy of less favored professional men.

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In the discussion of "Evangelism" at the meeting of the Ministerial Association at Vancouver last Wednesday, it was conceded that the "best time for conducting evangelical work is during the regular church service." Adherence to this principle would, of course, put "Gypsy" Smith, Billy Sunday et al. out of a lucrative job.

LET ABUTTING PROPERTY-PAY.

Why Should City Put Up for Extending Water Mains. PORTLAND, Or., Dec. 9.—(To the Editor.) I should like to express my opinion about the matter of the laying of water mains in this city, which is now being discussed by Mayor Simon and his Water Board. It is undoubtedly true that contractors are not anxious to bid on the work under present conditions. There are uncertainties about their ability to collect from individual property-owners. Mr. Simon believes that the work should be paid for out of the water fund, and that where I object. He and some members of the board evidently had this change in view at the time when they proposed to let abutting property pay (at a rate of 25 cents to 75 cents a month. While I do not want anything below cost, and think the minimum 25-cent rate is too low, can hardly see the justice or necessity of making the rate three times as high. I do not like to believe Mr. Simon possessed of any mercenary motives in this connection. He is a man of high character, no doubt many who have unimproved property, upon which they do not like to pay for laying water mains. Everyone knows that all improvements, such as water and sewers, enhance the value of vacant lots as much in proportion as they do to occupied land, and a new subdivision whenever a new residence goes up.

Therefore, I am not in favor of paying the cost of the water mains to the abutting property, but, in justice to him, and to induce him to bid on and do the work, can he not be paid for his work by the city, and the city collect from the property benefited by the improvement? That seems to me a fair and equitable arrangement, and that abutting property shall be protected.

THEORY THAT DR. COOK IS INSANE.

No other interpretation of the Latest Fraud Disclosures. PORTLAND, Dec. 9.—(To the Editor.) The disclosures against Dr. Cook published in today's Oregonian are not conclusive. While his case may be said to be weakening, he is far from convicted of fraud. Though the statement of alleged hired accomplices is published by so reputable a journal as the Oregonian, it must not be accepted on its face as true. It may be remembered that the Times was deceived last year by a vagabond named Earlsborough, who peddled around the city a forged newspaper, and then sold to the Times a forged article purporting to have been signed by Grover Cleveland. This article also created a sensation.

It is not possible that enemies of Dr. Cook, who are not inactive, may have engaged a man to impersonate Dr. Cook and then deal with Captain Loome and Mr. Dunkle? Is it reasonable to suppose that Dr. Cook, conscious of his every movement being watched, would at this late date attempt such a fraud? If the story published this morning is half way true, the only conclusion is that Dr. Cook has become insane. C. V. R.

"Split" Electoral Votes.

KIAMATH FALLS, Or., Dec. 8.—(To the Editor.)—The Saturday Evening Post, in the editorial of the 27th inst., spoke of it in the Presidential election of 1896 California was split. How could this be possible under the present Electoral College system of electing President? It does not seem probable that the state would select electors of opposing parties. V. T. MOZSCHENBACHEL.

Evidently this correspondent has not lived seventeen years in Oregon, else he would not have been so sure to choose two Republicans and one Capital as Presidential electors. Of course, in a state where the majority or plurality is in the hands of one party, it would be split, but where the vote is very close, carelessness or personal feeling for or against one candidate may cause a split. It is not necessary to elect two parties in the past thirty-two years. For example, Hancock carried California in 1850 by a few hundred votes, but Judge Terry, one of the most conspicuous of our statesmen, was defeated because enough Democrats remembered his duel with Broderick many years before and would not vote for him. Maryland last year, and in 1901, the electoral vote was split.

Ed Howe's Philosophy.

Atchison Globe. Somehow, we always hate to see a woman handle a gun. "You can't work and worry at the same time to good advantage. A man who worries throws rocks at his feet, and a woman who worries drops them. It is as important to keep out of court as it is to keep out of debt. There is an unusually large number of men who head this Winter wearing \$50 hats. "Music uplifts me, but I drop back again as soon as the music is over." "I don't know how it is with others, but when I begin telling my wrongs, I lie like a thief."—Ben Davis.

The two Senators of the United States at Washington, from Portland, Oregon, could easily adjust at the War Department, Washington, the matter of the drawbridges at Portland, Oregon; only it is a small matter, and, being statesmen, haven't time to attend to it.

THE MODERN FARMER.

The old order changeth and the farmer is coming into his own. Not the farmer of the funny papers, with his patched jeans held up by one "gallus," driving a spavined team with a broken-down cart. This class of agriculturists is rapidly following the past, the great auk and other rare birds, to the dead and forgotten past. In his place has appeared a progressive, well-read, prosperous individual, who seldom gets beyond the reach of the telephone and the daily paper. The old system of haphazard farming has no attractions for this modern agriculturist, and he has reduced his calling to a business, with its lessons of adversity have aided in bringing about this change, but to the greatest extent it is due to the spread of good farming gospel, as taught in the agricultural colleges