

The Oregonian

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A GOOD OPPOSITION.

Most persons who have thought intelligently upon the subject are of the opinion that popular government goes on better when the party power is but little stronger than the party in opposition. The fear of losing control checks its extravagance, chastens its disposition to pick the pockets of the public and inspires it with a diligent patriotism. On the other hand a weak or negligent party power is a positive incentive to the dominant party to lapse into corruption and often into tyranny. There was sound sense therefore in what President Taft said long ago in Philadelphia about the "good opposition." He opined that it was just what the Republicans needed to make them govern the country well and he added that an occasional defeat would help to nourish their virtue and strengthen their wisdom.

Unless the signs are deceptive this blessing is about to be vouchsafed them. The party which has for many years controlled the country is extremely likely to be defeated at the fall election and it remained to take its turn at the humble, but very useful, work of opposition. We shall see whether it will make a better job of it than the Democrats have.

It could hardly be a worse job. Ever since the Civil War the Democrats have presented a sad spectacle of failure when they had power and a sadder one when they had it not. When they obtained control of the government they have invariably been possessed with madness to do everything they could to get rid of it. When they were reduced to the low estate of an opposition party they seemed determined to prove that their incompetence was not merely temporary and accidental, but inherent in their nature. Of late years their inefficiency as critics and exhorters has been especially notable both in Congress and in the state capitals. Some seem to think that fault lies in their intellectual weakness and this is no doubt partly true. When a party has few members, it can do little but talk. Still, if it is vigilant, forceful and honest, even talk of great value to a popular government. It is highly regulative and exercises serious restraining influence over the party in power. The Democrats in Congress have always been ready enough to deal for the last ten years. Their speeches have been neither forceful nor honest. The fact is that the party of Jefferson seems not only to have lost its initiative and its energy, but its integrity has disappeared. Much worse than its lack of members has been its lack of principle. If it shows a little sincere purpose when it gets possession of power, as it has shown in opposition, the Republican party will not be out of office very long. Perhaps the interlude will, as President Taft says, do his party good. It will give the leaders time to think over their sins and leisure to study the true needs of the country. It will give the party a chance rather than being inclined to forget of late years.

The Democrats may gain seats in the Senate as well as full control of the party. They may do with their power? The Southern contingent of the party is more reactionary than the Aldrich machine. Its ignorance is impregnable to modern ideas. It is saturated with the prejudices of the last century. Besides its ignorance and self-satisfaction its conceit is boundless. It still thinks in terms of Jefferson's formulas and does not dream that changes have taken place in the world since that ambitious have passed away. Inasmuch as the Southern wing of the party will hold the balance of power, what hope is there that any progressive legislation can be enacted by the Democrats? The chances are that the congressional alliance with a session or two with dismal speeches on the subject of states' rights. There will be thousands of pages of denunciation. Tons of documents will be printed in praise of Southern civilization and the force will close. The sound and fury of it all will signify nothing. If we must have party changes next fall, it is a pity that some change could not be made which would accomplish results.

MR. ROCKEFELLER'S CHARTER. Little regret will be felt over the report that Mr. Rockefeller may abandon his project to incorporate his fortune under a National charter. The objections and difficulties in the way are said to have discouraged him so much that he will perhaps turn to some of the states for a charter or it may be that he will drop the scheme altogether.

Upon the whole the latter conclusion is the better. He has so much money that it would be a menace to the country in the form of a perpetuity no matter how excellent the intention might be in creating it. The power of an accumulation of wealth would be found to outweigh the authority of the law and it might turn out in the end to have become the real government of the country. At any rate this is what Congressmen have feared and their misgivings have been widely echoed by the press. The best thing that can happen to the Rockefeller fortune and others of similar magnitude is that they be distributed as such circumstances permit among a large number of heirs and beneficiaries of all sorts, the more the better. It will then dissipate itself and flow back gradually into the normal channels of production.

Sums of money which are devoted to charity are, of course, withdrawn from what is ordinarily called productive industry. No doubt they cause inestimable benefits to the country, but still they do not directly assist in the industrial process of the world as a whole. We Mr. Rockefeller's charter to be granted his wealth would become in a very real sense a perpetual mortgage upon the productive power of the United States, and the mortgage would be a heavy one. The annual income which it might draw would be obtained not from any wealth which it had produced, but from what other wealth engaged in active industrial processes had produced. Thus in reality the funds for his charitable work would be drawn from the labors of other men year after year forever. This is true of all wealth which has been withdrawn from industry, but usually the sums are so small that we may safely neglect their depleting influence.

The Rockefeller fortune on the contrary is not small. Its magnitude renders it a considerable factor in the industrial process of the world, and it cannot be permanently withdrawn without doing appreciable harm.

THE MEETING OF BUSY NEIGHBORS. Energies of these progressive days have various signs. One of them is the frequent meetings of busy neighbors. Just taken a party of Portland business men as visitors to their neighbors in Klamath and places intervening. An open river assembly has just been held in Oregon City and but shortly before there was a similar gathering in Albany. A little while back another open river convention was held at Pasco and on that occasion a party of Portland business men visited important places in the upper Columbia basin.

Now attention shifts to the presence in Portland of chiefs of the Hill railroad system, who are driving rail extensions into interior Oregon, and those activities have stirred their rivals of the Harriman lines to watch the so-called invasion.

This work-in-unison spirit is both the outgrowth of the new conditions in Oregon and also the creator of them. Wherever the Portland men travel they view busy scenes and vigorous optimism. The State of Oregon and, indeed, the whole Pacific Northwest, are linked together in this common neighborliness. It means the more that the chances of finding a kindred resource and trade and the development of new opportunities.

These are busy days for citizens who do things and keep in touch with their fellow-workers are doing.

than it has been accumulating wealth is shown by an increase in the cost of government to each individual from \$1.78 in 1880 to \$2.84 in 1909. In other words, the per capita cost of the government has increased approximately 60 per cent, while the government expense has more than doubled. The increasing distance between the percentage of gain in earnings and expenditures is shown to be a heavy one. The same is true of county and city affairs throughout the land. Were the United States alone in this attack of "financial delirium" the situation might appear grave, for in an emergency we could then turn to our thrifty neighbors. But the old world countries have also been extending themselves in the way of National debts, Germany and her dependencies having a debt of over \$4,000,000,000, while the National debts of all European countries reach the enormous total of \$29,552,800,000, with increases rather than decreases continually being noted. As a remedy for this unsatisfactory condition Mr. Hill suggests: "Individual and public economy; a just distinction between a high standard of comfort on one side and vulgar ostentation or criminal waste on the other; a check on income wasting, debt creation, and credit inflation."

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This has induced an extravagance which has even been mildly encouraged by a similar increase in the amounts of capital are shared from one part of the world to another speedily to alleviate temporary troubles. This interesting process of keeping our capital moving will continue until the inevitable limit is reached. Some idea of the rate at which we are approaching that limit can be gained by a study of a few of the complete statistical tables which accompany Mr. Hill's article. He shows that the per capita wealth of the United States rose from \$207.89 in 1850 to \$870.20 in 1880, and \$1,318.11 in 1909. That the Government as well as the individual has been increasing expenditures more rapidly

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our account in Europe for interest on foreign money which our present condition enabled us to borrow abroad for use in railroad construction and other industrial enterprises. When we got so poor that we are unable to get money from foreign countries there will be an immediate curtailment of a large portion of this expenditure, and the balance of trade will disappear automatically. That we have already learned that there are other articles than foodstuffs to be exported from this country is shown in the latest foreign trade statement of the bureau of statistics. For the nine months ending March 31 our exports of boots and shoes were \$1,800,000 greater than for the corresponding period in the preceding year. Steel rail exports showed an increase of \$2,300,000; electrical instruments \$1,400,000; sewing machines \$1,000,000; automobiles \$2,800,000; metal working machinery \$1,700,000; typewriters \$1,100,000; and throughout the list of articles manufactured in this country, gains were general. In the list of imports which includes our foreign trade, which Secretary Wilson seems to think indicates poverty on our part, the heaviest increases were in diamonds, art works and champagne.

For the nine months the value of diamonds imported was nearly \$2,000,000 greater than for the corresponding period in the preceding fiscal year. In art works the increase was exactly \$15,000,000, and in champagne \$2,000,000. These three items account for a considerable portion of the unfavorable balance of trade, and we could materially reduce the amount, if it were necessary to do so. In order to square the trade account, improved farming methods and soil conservation will greatly increase the yield of farm products in this country, but our manufacturing industries are increasing their output more rapidly than are the farms. Instead of our being unable to "buy food from foreign countries," there will soon be a decided advantage in the transaction.

Ex-President Zelaya, of Nicaragua, has just made public a farewell letter written by the American Leonard Groce, to his mother. After stating that this is "the last word you will ever receive from your wayward son," Groce continues: "This is my father's result of war and destruction to a loving mother." The condemned man in his letter freely admits joining the revolution. If this letter is authentic, as it seems to be, the American Government will be constrained to make good its promise to collect anything from Nicaragua in the way of damages for the execution of Groce. Whatever objection we might have to Zelaya and his brutal, tyrannical methods, it would appear that, so long as they have recognized head of the Nicaraguan government, he was clearly within his rights in taking the usual methods for putting down revolutions. The fate of Groce and Cannon may deter other Americans from having cotton and woolly rows in which they are not directly concerned.

That fairer fiction that a "future" contract to buy or sell cotton, wheat or any other commodity is a gamble, and does not mean the handling of any actual wheat or cotton, is again dispelled by the mercantile practice which Fatten, Scates and other "short" sellers who overestimated the size of the crop and sold large quantities of the staple which they did not possess. The active shorts were forced to purchase the wheat at the available supply that they had committed several thousand bales to be shipped to Europe which were actually needed in this country for making deliveries. As a result of this attempt to make a market for lower prices they are now obliged to bring back some of this cotton to offer on the May contracts. There is always a certain amount of gambling in future contracts, but the man who buys or sells on one must always be prepared to meet the consequences of the actual commodity it calls for.

The Oregonian prints today a statement from a member of the Methodist Church at Ashland, about his personal experiences with Evangelist Oliver; and he offers besides an estimate of the work and worth of the man. It is not flattering; it is unquestionably true. The Oregonian runs the risk, it knows, of appearing thus to "bring in" the work of a very cheap individual, and naturally many people will wonder why he should be given so great prominence. The reason is that this man, supported by many good people, is making a system of the various towns of Oregon, and the Oregonian thinks it has a duty to warn the public about him, his character and his methods. That is all we can do for the man. It is of no consequence whatever what Oliver or any other blackguard says about The Oregonian.

Or, the escaped convict, taken back to Walla Walla, admitted he is the man wanted. It will be recalled he bore all the identification marks, but his strenuous denial led many to believe he was not the man wanted. In a few years of upright life in this city are now of little value. The wonder in the case is that he remained in this region with the ever-recurring dread of recapture. Perhaps he hoped to escape the vigilant eye in a large city, and, with a bluff, brazen his way back to responsibility. It is a case of lapses of judgment that make a criminal career of little profit.

Putting aside the question of truth of his assertions, Mr. Gaynor showed lack of gentle courtesy in his attack on Mr. Hearst, who was, nominally at least, one of his hosts.

Oyster Bay need have little worry about its best citizen missing the enumerator. It is a safe wager that he is in the Seattle coast.

This change in temperature may put California berries on the street cheap today and let all enjoy short-cake tomorrow.

It is rained day in California and rained day on Puget Sound. Same here, too.

Artist Leavitt is as bad as Boni in the matter of a second marriage.

A good place to take the census would be at the baseball game.

What will be the second city in Oregon tonight?

A Set of Senators' Autographs, \$5. Washington, D. C. Dispatch. The pages of the United States Senate make quite a bit of pocket money by selling autographs of the Senators. It can be got for a dollar from a page for \$5. A few years ago one worth \$10. The youngsters tell the Senators they want the autographs for their desks, and seem to be winking at good-naturedly by the senators. Root and Aldrich are the hardest to capture.

A Bank Note With a History. London Echo. At the Bank of England, London, privileged visitors are sometimes shown the oldest known bank note for 655, with the date "15th Xber, 1692." The memorandum written across the note shows that payment was made by three instalments.

THE FREEDOM OF LONDON CITY. How It Will Be Bestowed on Mr. Roosevelt, and What It Means. Pearson's Weekly. The honor of the freedom of the city, which is to be conferred on ex-President Roosevelt shortly, is the highest honor that the City of London can bestow. It was conferred on Miss Florence Nightingale, the only woman who has ever received it. The wall of the anteroom of the Council Chamber is lined with the busts of those whom the city has honored in this way.

In conferring the honorary freedoms the old forms are still preserved. Six citizens will vouch for Mr. Roosevelt's worthiness in the following terms: "That Theodore Roosevelt is a man of good name and fame; that he does not desire the freedom of the city whereby to defraud the King or this city of any of their rights, customs or taxes; but that he will pay his scot and bear his lot; and so they all say." These citizens are called "the compurgators."

The City Chamberlain addresses the distinguished visitor, enlarging on the honor that is being bestowed. Mr. Roosevelt will then reply.

The Chamberlain then offers him the right hand of fellowship, and presents him with a gold box, heraldically decorated, containing an illuminated parchment of the Charter of the Council by which it was resolved that he should be presented with the freedom of the city of London. The box usually costs a hundred guineas.

Mr. Roosevelt was British he would then have to sign the following declaration: "I do solemnly decide that I will be good and true to our Sovereign Lord the King; that I will be obedient to the Mayor of this city; that I will maintain the franchises and customs thereof, and will keep this city harmless in that which in me is; that I will also keep the peace in my own person; that I will not do anything to be against the King's peace, but I will warn the Mayor thereof, or hinder it; and that all that I do in this city and articles I will well and truly keep, according to the laws and customs of the city, to my power."

But not being a subject of the King, he will, of course, not be asked to sign this declaration. So jealously, indeed, does the city value its rights of presenting the freedom, that it has on several times been presented to distinguished foreigners the gift in such a manner as to be nominal.

Garibaldi, the great Italian soldier, and De Lesseps, who made the Suez Canal, have both been voted the freedom. But in each case, the honor was not given to get it. The document received in such cases is only a record of the vote of the Common Council, not an actual resolution conferring the freedom. And in the Chamberlain's books it is not recorded that they do not give the freedom.

So that Mr. Roosevelt will be only nominally a freeman. No record of the freedom will be found in the Chamberlain's books.

WHAT HAVE INSURGENTS DONE? Regime is Still Cannon's and They Neglect to Deth