

The Oregonian

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ble, and that railroads are finding it almost impossible to secure money for repairs, extension and equipment. Both Kuhn, Loeb & Co. and J. P. Morgan & Co. in the past have always had at hand plenty of capital available for railroad and industrial investments, but it is quite apparent that there is something radically wrong when their clients decline their former favorites in railroads and industrial investments and invest in 4 1/2 per cent city bonds.

This showing alone ought to be sufficient to cause some of the most industrious anti-railroad, anti-corporation fighters to let up, thereby giving capital a chance to recover from its fright and again take up something more profitable in earning capacity than city bonds.

SHIP SUBSIDY HALF-TRUTHS.

There is something about the ship-subsidy question which seems to render its advocates incapable of grasping the case on its merits or submitting it for approval or rejection in accordance with the facts. The scarcity of legitimate reasons for a ship subsidy, of course, accounts for this substitution of theories, half-truths and untruths for plain facts.

Mr. Elwell, secretary of the Marine Committee of One Hundred, in his address at Washington Tuesday attempted to show "the way in which a nation's export trade is vitally connected with its merchant marine" by citing the case of the Oceanic line of steamers, which made regular trips out of San Francisco until 1907. "The Oceanic line," he stated, "was in operation, before being driven from the field by the subsidized Canadian and Japanese competition," said Mr. Elwell, "they carried from the port of San Francisco to Australia \$28,000,000 worth of goods."

The average reader, not particularly familiar with the details of the case, would hardly be able to get the impression from Mr. Elwell's words that our export trade with Australia had actually shrunk from \$28,000,000 in 1907 to \$2,000,000 in 1910. Let us consider the facts. The exports from the United States to Australia for the year ending December 31, 1907, were \$28,000,000. For 1908, the figures for 1910 are not yet available, but for 1909 the exports were \$20,847,250. The decrease was perfectly natural, due to unsettled financial conditions in Europe and all foreign dependencies, and the big powers, and the shipping trade.

Every shipping man in the country who is at all familiar with the matter knows that the Oceanic steamship line, which is San Francisco was put out of business by the low rates made by steamers running out of New York. Another factor in retarding the steamers of that line was the enormous cost of operation, the vessels being old and slow, and the fuel and so on.

GOVERNOR WILSON'S FIRST MESSAGE. The forceful candor of Governor Woodrow Wilson's public speeches and writings flows in part from the clarity of his thought. And he is able to think clearly because he is not afraid of anything, so far as one can make out, he has no ulterior motives.

Mr. Blythe has detected attempts at "initiative logrolling" in some of the measures submitted to the Legislature. He mentions specifically the imposition of undistributed laws upon the people by use of the "joker."

Wonderful logic this. Why not apply it also to Legislatures? In 1908 the Washington Legislature, not aided by the initiative, considered 326 measures and passed 249. The number of laws defeated was almost identical with the number of laws defeated by the voters of Oregon last November, in proportion to the sum-

mitted. Why may it not be held, therefore, that lawmaking through representatives is all that can be desired? The argument seems to be founded on the strange premises that all proposed laws are bad and that legislative virtue is measured by the number of laws defeated. Such reasons should go a step farther and advocate abolition of all lawmaking.

ill-advised were disapproved. Some good measures and a few bad ones were adopted. As to some of the approved measures we do not yet know how good or how bad they are. No one knows what they mean. On the whole, Mr. Blythe's article should be of service to other communities in indicating that the Oregon system has faults they should avoid in adopting the initiative and referendum.

Since the arrival of the six-day boat several years ago, the efforts of steamship men have been mainly directed toward increasing the speed of steamers instead of shortening the run across the Atlantic. When the Cunard line selected Fishguard as a port of entry the distance by water was materially shortened, and by crowding matters it was possible for the Mauretania to make the round trip in twelve days, including unloading and loading.

SPIRIT OF THE WEST.

The overwhelming burst of enthusiasm with which the cause of San Francisco has been taken up throughout the country can hardly be said to have material effect on the decision regarding the location of the Panama canal. It was perhaps natural that the entire West should rally to the support of the Western city. We may have private differences between communities, but on any proposition in which the West as a whole is to profit we stand pretty well together.

Most, or at least many, teachers in the public schools join in the opinion that fewer school holidays would be beneficial. For at least two or three days before the Christmas holidays and one or more days thereafter school work drags and it is impossible to cover the work actively. The same holds true of the other single day vacations. One holiday means practically the loss of three school days and so regarded. This is reason enough to prevent the maintenance of the present number of holidays, though it will probably not curtail the number of holidays we have, since custom rules and habit is strong.

WHAT BLYTHE LEARNED IN OREGON. In an article in the Saturday Evening Post for January 28, Samuel G. Blythe discusses the workings of the initiative and referendum. He offers neither favorable nor adverse criticism, but tells plainly some things accomplished by the people as a legislative body in Oregon and leaves the reader to form his own conclusions.

Very likely modestly prevented Chauncey Depew from openly stating his most convincing argument against the popular election of Senators, but the popular election of Senators, like the popular election of judges, is a quality he would like to champion.

Maybe it is all right for those who demand up-to-the-minute features of modern drama; still, to millions of theater-goers who have enjoyed Maxie Adams in Baret's delightful plays, the thought of her appearing in "Chanticleer" goes ag'in the grain.

While the big apple-growers are creating a selling agency, it is up to the army of small Oregon orchardists to raise such fine fruit that every thing beyond that agency will be a spontaneous buying agency.

Further proof that gambling is a universal and ineradicable vice is offered by the fact that men are betting and gamblers are making books on the verdict in a murder case on trial at Wheeling, W. Va.

After reading reports from state capitals, East, West, North and South, the conclusion is inevitable that a lot of peanut politicians are still playing the game of peanut politics.

Playing host to the Oregon Legislature is one of Eugene's happy ways of doing things. It generally pays to do things this way.

Stormy scenes precede election of Senators in states that adhere to the old way. In Oregon the storms follow later.

Well, the country must admit, whatever the result, that San Francisco is putting up a good fight.

ROGUE VALLEY AS WINTER RESORT. District is recommended for Oregon. Grants Pass, Ore., Jan. 21.—(To the Editor.)—Let us have a little more light on the Rogue River fish law that closed the stream to commercial fishing by the initiative process at the last election. Was it not represented by those who circulated the petitions for this act that there was no intention to interfere with the large salmon fishing business of the lower river?

The decrease of trout in Rogue River is not due to the salmon-fishing, but to the decrease of capital in the hands of the people who own the stream and the constant shifting of the gravel bars which destroy the salmon spawn. This shifting gravel in the riffles where the salmon eggs are deposited is due to the placer mining on this stream and its tributaries.

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INDIAN VS. PINCHOT CONSERVATION. Pioneer of 't Upholds Aborigines' Plan of Burning Underbrush. OREGON CITY, Ore., Jan. 24.—(To the Editor.)—I have read with a great deal of interest the communication from the different ones, also The Oregonian's editorials upon the conservation of our forests, and how to prevent forest fires.

Early on the Spring or as soon as the snow was gone the Indian would go up to hunt the elk, which were numerous in early days. The Indian would take his lagoon stick, or as we call it, a long pole with a hook at the end, and wherever he would put out fire wherever there was anything that would burn in the old burns, with the result that when the dry weather came the Indians could ride on horseback and do their hunting; the peatline and grass grew in all these burns and made fine feed for the game, and also for the Indians.

As Mr. Pinchot says it is hard to get the Government to change or correct a bad policy. If they should change it a little bit from what it is now, the Government would be doing a good deed. They would burn early in the Summer before the logs and old stumps were dry enough to burn. This light growth would make a little better place for the growth of the old logs, and just as soon as the fire reached the green timber it stopped, as everything in the timber was reserved for the lumber.

Now as to the destruction of the young growth of timber growing in the country, the time these early burns should be made it will be so damp that the fire will not run under them, but will protect them from the fire. This is the only information concerning these matters I will say it pertains to the western slope of the Cascades in Clackamas County as far as the burning of the timber is concerned. I have hunted and fished on every stream from Mount Hood to Mount Jefferson and have seen the Indians at their camps hunting their berry patches and make hunting easy for them and make feed for their horses.

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Life's Sunny Side. Francis Kilkenny, who had much to do with the back-to-Ireland movement that sent so many Irishmen home to visit this year, and is in the Treasury Department in Washington, landed in Chicago some years ago, fresh from Ireland, with but a few dollars and no job in sight. He started looking for a time and finally decided to buy a second-hand lawn-mower and make some money cutting grass. He got his mower and gave it to the good farmer on the north side of Chicago and finally struck the place where the big houses and the lawns are.

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