The Oregonian

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PORTLAND, MONDAY, APRIL 17, 1911.

SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT IS UNSATISFACTORY.

One year's experience under a Socialistic administration has proved to Milwaukee that the comparatively new party does not offer relief from all ills with which civic government is affected. While some reforms of minor importance have been accomplished, a strict adherence to party doctrines has resulted in placing many departments of the city in the hands of men whose only qualification for the work is loyalty to the party. The position of Street Commissioner was created and an appointee named who had been for fifteen years in the employ of the asphalt trust. Under his administration nothing but bituminous pavement can be laid in the city. The credit of the city has been impaired by the radical change in administration and for the first time in its history the city has been compelled to borrow money on interest in anticipation of tax collections. These and other troubles that beset the Wisconsin metropolis seem to prove that further changes in our system of city government are a necessity before the taxpayers who foot the bills can get the full value of their money.

Some recent testimony offered by the present Mayor of this city and an ex-Mayor tends to create the belief that it may be the system more than the party that is responsible for much of the trouble. It may be that the proposed commission plan which is now growing in favor will offer a solution of the problem that is troubling not only Milwaukee, but Portland and other cities. With some slight variations, a recent editorial on this topic in the New York World might apply quite forcibly to Portland. The World asserts that "The city cannot suppress burglary and violence. It cannot stop half-time in the schools. It cannot clean the streets. It cannot protect the parks from hoodlums. It cannot force the asphalt contractors to mend holes in the pavement. It cannot build subways even when it has $2,000,000 worth of plans, every legal obstacle removed and the money saved to begin with. All it can do is to spend $250,000,000 per year."

Portland, with the almost unanimous consent of the people and with $50,000 worth of plans on hand, has been for two years trying to make a start toward building the Broadway bridge. We cannot build the bridge and we cannot build a decent police station, although every grand jury that has met in the past decade has condemned the present inadequate, disease-breeding dump that is used as a station. We cannot make our street contractors repair pavements and we cannot even select the kind of pavement we would like to have on the streets. We cannot restrict the spread of social outcasts through the respectable districts of the city, and we cannot force contractors to remove from the street and sidewalk unsightly and dangerous obstacles like that now located at Fourth and Washington. There are a good many other things which we apparently cannot do under our present form of government, but like New York we can spend millions of the taxpayers' money each year, with all the abandon of a drunken sailor, and somehow, in some way, the tax eaters who year after year snuggle close to the city cashbox, never experience any difficulty in getting their salaries.

Milwaukee's experience with the Socialists has thrown no light on the grave problem, but it has shown that until there is a change in our system of city government new parties and old parties will be very much alike.

RECIPROCITY STRUGGLE BEGUN.

The first guns in the Canadian reciprocity battle in Congress were fired Saturday and Mr. Kitchin, who led the attack for the reciprocity forces, apparently had much the best of the conflict. The Democratic member from North Carolina seemed willing to go down the line with a free list that would satisfy the most exacting. He not only promised Mr. La Follette, the new member from Washington, to vote for free sugar if the Washingtonian would vote for free lumber, but he agreed to put all trust-controlled articles on the free list and then some others. Mr. La Follette, in his Palouse home, has watched the threatening antics of the free wheat bogie so long that he interrupted to inquire, "If the difference in the price of wheat on the two sides of the Canadian border was not evidence of the value of a wheat duty to the American farmer."

So long as it is true that the surplus supplies of American wheat and Canadian wheat seek the same markets in Europe, and that the price is fixed by conditions prevailing in Liverpool and London—the grain markets for the world, there is no other locality in the United States that could be so far removed from Canadian wheat competition as the district represented by Mr. La Follette. The only market open for the surplus wheat grown in Washington is in Europe, where the Canadian surplus is marketed, and until consumption of wheat in the United States overtakes the production, the Liverpool price will be the overwhelming factor in fixing the price on both Canadian and American wheat. For Mr. La Follette of Washington to fear that the admission, duty free, of Canadian wheat into the United States would affect the price of Washington wheat is fully as logical as it would be for him to fear a decline in the price of Washington wheat because there is no duty that prevents shipping Oregon wheat across the state line.

Commercial statistics showing the exports of wheat from Canada have been frequently printed and are sufficient to quiet any fears of the farmers that the price of wheat can in any manner be affected by the removal of the duty so long as both countries remain on an export basis. Admitting that the price would be affected some time in the distant future when the consumption of the cereal outran the production, it is questionable whether, even then, a duty would be advantageous or defensible. Invocation of that good sound doctrine of the "greatest good to the greatest number" would show that where one wheatgrower might be benefited a thousand consumers would be injured by higher prices.

It will be a good many years before this equalization of consumption and production takes place and meanwhile a duty on wheat is fully as dangerous and damaging to the American farmer, especially in Mr. La Follette's bailiwick, as sunshine and rain administered in proper proportions.

CIRCUMLOCUTION OF HOME RULE LAW.

Shortly after the November election The Oregonian expressed, in effect, the opinion that the framers of the home rule amendment had merely led the people of the state in a walk around a circle. The first court construction of the amendment has now been given by Judge J. W. Knowles in the Tenth Judicial District, and this decision seems to coincide fully with what The Oregonian has said.

This decision, coming from the Circuit Court, is of course not final, but it is interesting as showing the trend of judicial opinion. "I believe," says Judge Knowles in his opinion, "that the only reasonable construction that can be placed upon the above constitutional amendment (home rule measure) is that where the local option law is in force in a county by a vote of the people of such county, that towns, cities and municipalities do not have the right to license the sale of intoxicating liquors within the corporate limits of said town, municipality or city."

The main issue in the case decided was not the question of the right of voters of a city located in dry territory to authorize by election the sale of liquor in the city. It involved the right of the City Council in a city in dry territory to issue saloon licenses. But the same course of reasoning that led to Judge Knowles' decision would seemingly apply to measures initiated by the voters in dry cities. There is nothing in the amendment bearing the construction that the voters may enact laws pertaining to the sale of liquor regardless of the local option law, but that the City Council may adopt such measures subject only to the local option law.

If Judge Knowles' construction finally prevails the time and effort expended in the adoption of the amendment will have been fruitless. The country precincts will still be able to force prohibition on unwilling towns if they have the necessary preponderance of votes. Local option will not have been changed in definite particular. Meaningless phrases will merely have been added to the constitution.

The situation leads one directly to one of the guide-boards placed along the road to a proper initiative by Theodore Roosevelt. He has wisely declared that the initiative should be safeguarded by some method that will guarantee competent drafting of measures. The home rule amendment is a striking example of the need of such a safeguard in Oregon. It is a measure to which a final clause was added apparently for the sole purpose of gaining votes. In effect this last clause is the string attached to the April Fool purse. When we attempt to pick the purse from the sidewalk it is jerked away with the cord.

The Oregonian, however, is not complaining so much concerning the ineffectiveness of this particular measure as it is of the looseness which permits the use of ambiguities and catch phrases in initiative measures to an extent that deprives the people of knowledge as to the true effect of legislation submitted to them.

THE COMIC SUPPLEMENT.

The comic supplement which has become a rather prominent feature of all of the newspapers in the big cities of the country is receiving some rather severe criticism in the East, and a number of organizations for the suppression of the horror have been formed. Unfortunately for those who are offended by the presence of this ridiculous buffoonery which has such a strong hold on the children, public sentiment is not yet ready to abolish it. The Sunday supplement comics are printed by the newspapers for the same reason that detailed accounts are printed of prize fights, salacious law suits and other kinds of news eagerly read by some and rejected by others. A newspaper with unlimited capital behind it and a desire to spend that capital most rapidly, could serve the public with just what the editor thought the public ought to have. The public, however, would show its disapproval of such a policy by refusing to buy the paper, and in due season, when the capital was depleted, the paper would perish.

No one has yet succeeded in putting out a paper that was satisfactory to all readers. If some paragon of all journalistic virtues should reach this pinnacle of success, he would have no opposition. The world would need but one paper. Nearly all owners and editors of our newspapers would undoubtedly be willing to do away with the Sunday scarecrow if there were not a demand from the public that pays the bills. The view of the general public on the matter was quite pointedly set forth at a meeting of the League for the Improvement of the Children Comic Supplement held in New York a few days ago, when Mrs. John Martin said:

"We gain nothing by closing our eyes to facts, and there are two notable facts connected with the question before us. First, that these things which we object to, this comic supplement and these columns of horrors, the people like and will pay their scanty pennies for, day after day. Second, that according to all American traditions, they have as good a right to like them as we have not to like them, as good a right to their opinion as we have to ours. They raise no objection to our reading Emerson or Browning, or becoming addicted to works on ethics or philosophy. Why then do we assume to interfere with their pleasures, their tastes and their habits? I admit freely that the newspapers are bound to give the people what they want. But I should not be here tonight, I should not raise my voice in this meeting of protest, did I not believe that I too am a part of the people and did I not know that I am not getting what I want."

The successor to the comic supplement is likely to be obtained, if obtained at all, through a process of evolution. The effort of the advanced newspapers now is to obtain something that will satisfy the demand and yet be wholesome as well as humorous. For a comic page especially designed to please children and still point an occasional moral, the New York Herald Company has supplied in the Twee Deedle series now running in The Oregonian one that comes nearer filling the bill than anything yet evolved. But there will probably always exist a class of newspaper patrons that will demand a supplement devoted to slapstick buffoonery; grown-ups are demanding the comic supplement for their own amusement. It is not altogether a demand from juveniles, and so long as the supplements continue to exist there will remain different standards conceived to please different tastes just as there will continue to exist different standards of comedy on the stage conceived to meet different demands.

THE REAL LOSS.

Not in many years—perhaps not since the British sacked Washington nearly a century ago—has the country suffered as heavy a loss by fire, in the far-reaching sense, as was suffered by the burning of the New York Capitol at Albany two weeks ago.

While the building itself cost in the neighborhood of $27,000,000, much of this sum representing the robbery of contractors in collusion with priceless politicians, this loss can be replaced and is indeed infinitesimal as compared with that of the priceless records that were stored for safe keeping in this massive and presumably fireproof building. New York had given more attention to the collection and preservation of archives bearing upon the achievements of the state and Nation than had any other state. The loss of these from fire, smoke and water, while not complete, is very great—greater than that of the building.

Since the fire wrought the wreck that it did, it may be regretted that it left one stone upon another of the great four-square structure that was impressive only because of its great size and artistic only in details that escape general observation. In this view the worst may be said to be yet to come, since it will probably be repaired at enormous cost, along the old lines of construction, which represented, seemingly, but a succession of afterthoughts in architecture, due possibly to the length of time, verging upon a quarter of a century, over which its erection was carried.

MORE TAX QUESTIONS.

Another handful of questions on tax matters has been handed to The Oregonian by Mr. S. W. Babcock, who uses a typewriter particularly in favor with other writers on the same subject. We note the following:

I notice in your city that electric lines are assessed for $8,000,000. Is that 20 per cent of what they are worth? I see that the assessment for Oregon railroads is about $72,000,000. Would not their rights of way and special franchises sell for five times that? In the county of this state boost literature says there is $50,000,000 worth of standing timber, yet the non-tillable lands altogether are assessed for less than $11,000,000. Could not the farmers and the small homeowners be relieved by taking up some of this evident wholesale tax dodging?

What would be the most likely amount of personal property and improvements that could be entirely exempted, as you seem to suggest? From talking with many I do not believe that $300 would be accepted now. Many would vote for what is called the single tax (although I do not understand that we could adopt that theory in toto in Oregon) unless some substantial concession is made. Will not the matter be pushed further than the conservatives desire? Some say that $3000 would give the home owner in city and country encouragement to build and improve a small tract or lot to the utmost. If offered as an initiative amendment I think it would carry because many who are not in any way single taxers will vote for it, and many would see in it a better chance to head off the single tax than the amendments offered by the last Legislature. What figure of exemption would be about right? Why not have a state tax league to enforce fair assessments under our present laws?

The Oregonian would not attempt to give an estimate on the value of the rights-of-way and franchises of the electric railways of Portland, nor would it attempt to estimate the value of the railroads of Oregon. Probably each class of property is under-assessed. But this condition is an old problem, which is now in process of solution. The Railroad Commission of Oregon has been engaged for some time in determining the physical value of railroads and undoubtedly, when the work is completed, the valuations thus determined will be used as a basis for correcting railway assessments. It has been done in Washington, where the work was begun in advance of the Oregon undertaking. There a fairly accurate adjustment has been made under which general property and railroad property are assessed in proportion.

Oregon at the last session adopted a public service commission measure. This commission, if it is permitted by referendum-seeking enemies to accomplish the work it is authorized to do, will compile accurate information concerning electric railways on which assessments may be based that will stand the test of courts.

It is undoubtedly true that the farmers and homeowners would be relieved by a higher tax assessment on timber. The answer is so obvious that it is idle to discuss it. But does Mr. Babcock seek to give the impression that an exemption of $3000 on personal property would necessarily result in higher taxes on timber or public utilities? If timber and public utilities are now under-assessed, is there any reason to believe that if certain other property were relieved the assessing officers would be less discriminatory? Would they not be just as likely to raise the rate, or perhaps increase the assessments on farm lands, town lots and personal property not exempted?

The Oregonian does not believe that a $3000 exemption on personal property and improvements would be an ounce of encouragement to the better improvement of farm or lot property. The average man proceeds gaily to vote for more bonds and greater expenditures from the public purse and for inefficient officials without a thought of his taxes. He does not think of taxes until he gets his notice of assessment and then he does not blame himself nor does he blame the men he elects to office so often as he denounces the system. He squeals when he gets his notice and again when he pays the bill—then goes ahead with his daily work unmindful of taxes until the next paying period rolls round.

The Oregonian would favor an exemption of $300, but is not wedded to those exact figures. Such an exemption would aid those least able to pay. It has no fear that there will be no conservative measure presented to the people in the next election. There will undoubtedly be measures proposed of many kinds and many varieties. The danger threatening worthy tax reform measures is not in the lack of "concessions." Multiplicity is more to be feared. The people are likely to reject the whole list in disgust, as they did the county boundary bills in the last election.

Why not a state tax league? Why not?

The official returns on the population of India have just been issued at Calcutta, and the figures offer excellent reason for the unpleasant conclusion that in India thousands perish annually from insufficiency of food that is not easily obtainable in such an over-populated country. The returns show a population of 315,000,000, a gain, in spite of the death of millions by starvation, of more than 20,000,000 in the past ten years. What this congestion of population means can be partially understood when it is remembered that the entire area of India is about the same as that of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, California, Montana, Nevada, Arizona, Utah and Wyoming. With the economic conditions that must prevail in such a country, it is small wonder that there is an increasing swarm of the turbaned, swarthy sons of the Far East descending like locusts on the more favorable labor fields of America.

Nine steamships arriving in port yesterday showed the diversified nature and increasing importance of Portland's ocean commerce. The fleet included the 10,000-tonner Luceric, in from the Orient to load outward with general cargo for the Far East; the Norwegian steamship Sark, from Eureka, to load lumber for Australia, and the Riverside, from Panama, with general cargo from New York via the Isthmus. The coastwise fleet included the Roanoke, Tamalpais and Westerner, with passengers and freight from the California ports; the Rosecrans with oil from San Francisco, and the Breakwater and Alliance, from Coos Bay, with passengers and freight. The combined carrying capacity of this fleet is about 40,000 tons of freight. In number and tonnage the totals are nearly large enough to equal a full week's business of a few years ago.

The muckrakers, land-lockers and over-conservationists who are responsible for the retarding of Alaska's growth are the same men who rejected the word of the President in the Ballinger controversy. Whatever President Taft may say about Alaskan problems after his forthcoming visit to that territory will be rejected by the same individuals, it may be expected, if it does not accord with the suspicions and theories they have obtained at long range. But, while the President's expressed confidence was not sufficient to protect Ballinger from vilification by the enemies of both, recommendations to Congress based on first-hand knowledge will undoubtedly have a potent influence on legislation governing Alaska. The day of the muckraker in Alaskan conditions is waning and we may expect the President's trip to hasten the night for such busybodies.

Mr. James Rolph, president of the San Francisco Merchants Exchange, and a businessman well and favorably known all over the Pacific Coast, is being groomed as a Mayoralty candidate to run against Mayor McCarthy. Mr. Rolph has never held a political office but he has managed business affairs, large and small, with a display of talent and intelligence that augurs well for his Mayoralty qualifications. Mr. Rolph is said to be an unwilling candidate but is being put forward by an element that believes San Francisco will be the gainer by the substitution of businessmen and taxpayers for the politicians who have for a long time been running the city government in San Francisco. If Mr. Rolph is elected, the Californians can rest assured that the Eastern visitors who come out to the Panama Exposition will find a city government for which no apologies are necessary.

How a woman could expect to see the "set" of the back of her hat by turning her head until her neck was dislocated is a mystery fathomable only by the sex, but the Nebraska girl who tried to do so Saturday and had to be hurried to a hospital to be straightened will never "rubberneck" again.

One Tacoma candidate for Mayor has had four wives and his rival kept out of the nooso until he was 48. On such an issue, neither Solomon nor the late B. Young, both of whom, it must be admitted, acquired large experience, could make a forecast of the result.

Speaking of Presidential "lids," a dispatch in The Oregonian says Mr. Taft's head has changed shape and "Mr. Roosevelt's head grew bigger during his term of office." Almost anybady's head would swell a little on that job.

These provincial governments may now be given credit for doing the right thing. The captain of the Iroquois has been arrested for manslaughter for saving himself at the expense of the lives of crew and passengers.

There have been jokes about railroads alleged to be but two streaks of rust, but nobody believed them until the State Railway Commission rode on the Central Oregon at Union.

In disgust at working for $41.66 a month the Deputy District Attorney of Clackamas County has resigned and another wants it, even at that meager rate of pay.

With all manner of fireworks prohibited in the interest of a sane Fourth, celebration of the day must revert to the pioneer method.

The groundhog service, having provided proper Easter weather, can now leave the field to its rivals, who are mere weather guessers.

There will be plenty of fruit for cherry festivals and apple shows, and strawberries galore.

J. C. Stubbs is entitled to a rest after forty-two years of tremendous work.

With butter at 26 cents, the high cost of living is greasing the slide.

The past week has shown the oil pot to be the thing.

It was a rainless and joyous Easter Sunday.

GREAT CONVENIENCE OF MONEY

If People Did Business by "Swapping," How Could They Deliver?

Philadelphia Ledger.

Senator McCumber, of North Dakota, in addressing his colleagues in opposition to the reciprocity bill, declared that "city folk" are wantonly extravagant, and produced a singular and certainly picturesque tabulation of certain figures to prove it. He said that when the farmer goes to spend a day in the city his scale of expenditure is as follows, in terms of the products of the farm:

Cab to hotel.....Six bushels of oats
Tip to driver.....Fifteen cabbages
Tip to elevator boy.....Two dozen eggs
Tib to bellboy, one and a half bushels barley
Breakfast.....Three-fourths of a ton of hay
Tip to waiter.....Two bushels of potatoes
Luncheon.....One sheep
Tip to waiter, one and a half bushels carrots
Dinner.....Four bushels of rye
Tip to waiter.....One bushel of onions
Room.....Half a car of turnips

The Senator from North Dakota does not include in the reckoning the price of theater tickets for the evening's diversion, nor the transportation and the supper afterward. These charges might easily amount to the wages of the hired man for a month.

The translation of the payment for the comforts and luxuries of civilization into the terms of agricultural products brings one back to the period when payment was customarily "in kind," and reminds us that the word "pecuniary" is derived from the Latin word that signifies a flock or herd of cattle. The term bills of students at American colleges in the eighteenth century were often paid, as subscriptions for country newspapers are frequently defrayed nowadays, in kindling wood or butter and eggs or corn. The actual sight of what a given sum of money will buy is far more impressive to the untutored mind than the cash in hand, which partly accounts for the eagerness of poor and improvident persons to exchange their earnings as soon as possible for something of impressive bulk or spectacular appearance. They may buy something they do not really want because they seem to be getting a great deal for their money. The successful auctioneer knows of this human frailty, and is not slow to take advantage of it. The child with a penny to spend for candy cares litle for quality, and takes seven for a cent in preference to six because his penny seems to go further in the purchase.

No one can realize the convenience of money till he thinks of what it would mean to Morgan or Rockefeller to have a colossal fortune changed into oats and cabbages, onion and potatoes. The conductor who was paid a couple of sweet potatoes instead of a nickel by each passenger would soon have no room in his car for passengers. What an experience it would be to carry a handful of beans in one's pocket to pay for the morning paper, or to make a purchase with a pumpkin and receive a few squashes in change. The institution of money, often roundly abused by moralists, deserves its popularity.

THEY HAVE CROMWELL'S HEAD.

An English Family Proudly Claim Possession of the Skull.

New York Tribune.

The reputed head of Oliver Cromwell was exhibited recently at a meeting of the Royal Archaeological Society at Burlington House. The Rev. H. R. Wilkinson said that the head had been in his family for three generations, and in that time had never been previously exhibited in public.

The tradition was that the skull was blown off Westminster Hall and was picked up by a sentry, who hid it, and only confessed on his deathbed to his wife that he had it in his keeping. It passed into the possession of the Cambridgeshire family of Russell, and came to Sam Russell, a needy actor.

Then it was sold to Cox, the proprietor of the museum in Spring Gardens, and was transferred by him to three persons, who exhibited it in Bond street. Next it came into the hands of Rev. Mr. Wilkinson's grandfather.

Sir Henry Howorth said that the evidence seemed to make it extremely probable that the head shown was really that of the Protector. Professor Boyd Dawkins did not think he heard of a more complete chain of circumstances.

State and Cabinet Officers.

TURNER, Or., April 11.—(To the Editor.)—

1. What is meant by the recall system?
2. Who are the Representatives in the Sixty-second Congress from Oregon?
3. How many members in the Senate of the Oregon Legislature? In the House?
4. The names of the state officers of Oregon.
5. The names of the members of President Taft's Cabinet.

BLANCHE SMALL.

1. In Oregon the recall is the power of the voters to institute an election to determine whether any elected officer shall retain his position for the remainder of his term or be superceded by another.
2. A. W. Lafferty and W. C. Hawley.
3. Thirty Senators and 60 Representatives.
4. Governor, Oswald West; Secretary of State, appointee to succeed F. W. Benson, deceased, not yet named officially; Treasurer, Thomas B. Kay; Attorney-General, A. M. Crawford; School Superintendent, L. R. Alderman; Printer, W. S. Dunlway; Labor Commissioner, O. P. Hoff; Railroad Commissioners, C. B. Aitchison, F. J. Miller, T. K. Campbell; Engineer, John H. Lewis; Water Superintendents, James T. Chinnock, First District; George T. Cochran, Second District; Supreme Court Justices, H. J. Bean, T. A. McBride, G. H. Burnett, F. A. Moore, Robert Eakin.
5. Secretary State, Philander C. Knox; Secretary Treasury, Franklin MacVeagh; Secretary War, John M. Dickinson; Attorney-General, G. W. Wickersham; Postmaster-General, F. N. Hitchcock; Secretary Navy, George Von L. Meyer; Secretary Interior, W. L. Fisher; Secretary Agriculture, James Wilson; Secretary Commerce and Labor, Charles Nagel.

They Guard Shakespeare's House.

London Evening Times.

The trustees of Shakespeare's birthplace have held a special meeting at Stratford-on-Avon, at which it was unanimously decided to purchase for $4500 the house occupied by the secretary to the trust, since its proximity to Shakespeare's house would enable their chief officer to exercise full and constant control over the most important property belonging to the trustees, and its acquisition would permanently secure the birthplace against any defacement by unsuitable buildings in its immediate neighborhood. It was reported that the secretary's dwelling house had been placed in direct communication by telephone with the police and fire stations and with the burglar alarm at the birthplace.

Standard Fruit Measures.

GOSSAN, Switzerland, March 29.—(To the Editor.)—What is the standard measure of a crate of strawberries or loganberries?

What is the standard measure of a box of apples (such as are in use on the Pacific Coast)?

Who is president of the Oregon Development League? STEADY READER.

A crate of strawberries or loganberries contains 24 quarts; net weight, 24 pounds. The net weight of a box of apples is 48 pounds.

J. B. Wilcox, Concord building, Portland, Or., is president of the Oregon Development League.

Timely Tales of the Day

Bashful young men who timidly approach the desk in the Country Clerk's office and ask for marriage licenses, have been mystified of late by hearing the tolling of a wedding bell near at hand. Invariably the young man and the intended bride who accompanies him look about for the bell, which seems close at hand, but cannot be seen. At first they do not quite understand what it means, for the clerks are generally busy and do not seem to notice the unusual sound. Then, as if by a signal, all the clerks begin to laugh, and the applicants for the marriage license suddenly realize that the whole thing is a good-natured joke, intended for their benefit.

The bell was the invention of G. M. Allen, deputy County Clerk, who placed it under the counter bearing the records of marriage licenses and before which the applicants must stand. It is operated by a rope carried to a lever at the other end of the counter. Thus it is quite evident to the applicants that the man in front of them, making out their license, could not be the author of the noise, the direction of which is an uncertainty.

One of the first victims of the joke was an exceedingly bashful man, who seemed so startled when the bell began to ring that the clerks were afraid he would run out of the office. This embarrassment was increased when the various employes from other parts of the big room gathered to enjoy the joke. He soon recovered himself, however, and took the matter good-naturedly, as all others have taken it since the bell was installed.

The usual crop of fish stories is ripe again with the opening of the Spring season. Most of the sportsmen who have the habit of theatrical "first-nighters" and want to usher the season in the minute the embargo is lifted by the state laws, report that the season this year has started off badly. Several of the boys were telling their hard-luck yarns in the hearing of A. K. Bently, who is something of a fisherman, and, after he had listened to a number of sad tales, he said:

"You fellows don't know anything about fishing. You always pick the wrong place. If you want some real fishing, take a trip up on the McKenzie River some day. The trout are so plentiful there that they eat up all the food in the river and in order to keep from starving to death they take a deep, full breath and climb up on the banks and eat the grass along the shore, and when they have had enough they slide back in the stream and rest."

"I don't know so much about the McKenzie River," put in Don Rea, but up on the Deschutes, near Bend, the trout are so thick the year around and are so hungry that you've got to hide behind a tree while you bait the hook. But even then, you don't always have much luck unless you wind your line with strong wire, for just as soon as one of the fish take the hook, all the rest in the school flock around him and chew the line off. We have had the best luck by taking a shovel or a rake and just scooping the fish out."

Some friends of the late Wallace Stuart, who was accidentally drowned at South Bend, Wash., the other day, were discussing his untimely end and from that the conversation drifted to the oyster industry in which Stuart had been engaged the last few years.

"That business would make a man a millionaire in a few years," commented C. B. Pfahler, one of the group. "I don't know of any kind of an industry that requires less labor and gives greater returns than oyster raising. Of course, a man has got to know something about the game or he will fail, as he would in any other line, but for the man who knows something about the industry it is a money-maker.

"Here, just before he lost his life, Stuart was preparing to go back East to get a couple of carloads of seed oysters from the Atlantic coast near Boston Bay. These seed oysters which are not much bigger than your finger nail cost about $15,000 a carload, so you see, besides knowing how, it requires some cash to go into the business. But then, when these oysters are brought here, the only thing you have to do is to wait till the tide goes out and then sow the seed oysters just like you would wheat, right in the sand. The little fellows burrow down, and there they stay. For the next four years they require little care, and at the end of that time the oysters are grown—the big fat Toke points you buy in the market. By that time they are the size of your hand and the carload, which cost $15,000 as seed, is now worth about $90,000 in the market. That is only 500 per cent on your money, or a little better than 100 per cent a year. That is almost as good as buying inside real estate in Portland."

"There are times in your life," said Harvey Beckwith, president of the Portland Commercial Club and who served as chairman of the general committee which had charge of the entertainment of Colonel Roosevelt when he visited Portland recently, "when you feel like delivering a solar plexus upon your visitor who calls at most inopportune times. Now I do not believe I am hard to approach and I have never felt it necessary for a man to send in his card to see me. But there was a time when I wished for something stronger than a bodyguard and it was only a brief time ago, for there is nothing that annoys me quite so much as a showing of disrespect to eminent men.

"The incident that I have in mind took place in my office just previous to the arrival of Colonel Roosevelt. A man—unknown at the time to me—but well dressed—came to my office and took a seat. He began by saying, 'Hello, Beckwith, when do you expect to go down to see the old man?'

"Of course, I had an idea to whom he referred, for I was then engaged in working out the details of the entertainment. However, I gave no indication of understanding the drift of his remark and replied:

"'I beg your pardon, sir, but to whom do you refer as the "old man?"'

"'Why, Roosevelt, of course,' was the explanation. 'The old man and I toured this country together in one of his campaigns and I am a personal friend of his.'

"'Is that so?' was my reply. 'Well, I never heard the ex-President of the United States referred to as "the old man," and I am sure that it is none of your business when I go down the road to meet him. Good morning.'

"That was the best I could do under the circumstances."

Road Poll Tax Law.

JORDAN VALLEY, Or., April 12.—(To the Editor.)—Was the $3 road poll tax collected by ward supervisors in portions of the state abolished, and if so in what manner? HENRY SCOTT.

The county option tax amendment approved in the last election contains an inhibition against poll tax. The Oregonian is advised that the amendment invalidates the road poll tax law.

Another Egg Record.

CANBY, Or., April 14.—(To the Editor.)—Reading of the record of Southern Slope Farm, Hood River, I am sending a record of my little flock of eight Rhode Island Red hens, from which I received 121 eggs. I would like to read of more record-breakers. MRS. J. H. COLLEY.

No.

CONDON, Or., April 12.—(To the Editor.)—Can a divorced person from Oregon go to British Columbia and marry before the six months required by the law here is up and come back here legally married? W. H.

Advertising Talks

By William C. Freeman.

Why do so many corporations waste their money in lobbying? Why do they submit to the demands made upon them by men who are trying to fatten their pocketbooks by hook or crook?

The remedy is in their own hands.

If all corporate interests want to get **a square deal** from the people, and through them a square deal from their representatives in Legislatures, the best thing for them to do is to take the people into their confidence through **paid advertising** in the daily newspapers.

Their story will be read by the people if they put it before them in this manner.

The people have formed various opinions about corporations, mostly unfavorable, because corporations have never **talked directly** to them.

Many misconceptions that now exist about corporations would disappear if **frank statements of facts** appeared in the advertising columns of the newspapers.

A great many people are wrought up over the outrages, imaginary or real, that are perpetrated on them by corporate interests, and they send men to the legislative bodies with instructions to enact any kind of laws that will curb corporations.

Governor Woodrow Wilson, of New Jersey, is urging eloquently and persistently the wisdom of **frank publicity in politics and in business,** and there is a growing sentiment all over the country that the people shall hear from the great business interests themselves **their side** of the story.

Newspapers want to be fair, but **why** should they go out of their way to fight everybody's battles, especially when they are inundated with notices which press agents of big corporations try to get inserted as news?

The press agent is the greatest **menace** to the cause of setting corporations right with the public. Let them print straight advertising news and the public will give them a **fair hearing and its endorsement** if they are on the level.

(To be continued.)

COUNTRY TOWN SAYINGS BY "ED" HOWE

(Copyright, 1911, by George Matthew Adams.)

A widow with an income of $800 a year can get along better than a widower can on $1,000.

Sometimes an ugly man is all right in other ways.

There is one thing about working on a newspaper that is distressingly strenuous: When you use a word you are compelled to spell it.

It is often said of men, after being sent to the penitentiary, that they are model prisoners. Why couldn't they have begun the model business a little earlier?

I only confess to know two things: (1) What I want; and (2) That I don't get it.

If I don't like a man, I hate to hear his money rattle.

Men talk a good deal about their bravery, but as a matter of fact that part of a man that isn't sheep, is rabbit.

Are you capable of being fair with a man you dislike? I confess I am not.

Men object to kissing in public, but they can be coaxed into it in private.

I am not afraid of the devil, but I am afraid of the dog on approaching a strange house.

Half a Century Ago

From The Oregonian, April 17, 1861.

The consolidated telegraph interest of California has filed certificate of incorporation under the title, "The California State Telegraph Company." The capital is to be $1,250,000 divided into 12,500 shares. They have 18 projects, one of which is to run by this place to Olympia and Victoria.

The third annual fair of the Lane County Agricultural Society will be held near Eugene on the 9th and 10th of October.

Information has been received at Washington that the Southern Confederacy is getting up a fleet of light war steamers, of which Captain Tatnall, late of the U. S. Navy, is to take command.

We have private information that large numbers of people in Texas want to sell their property and emigrate to Oregon and Washington Territory; but property cannot be sold at any price.

Jefferson Davis recently sent a secret agent to Mexico with the view to negotiating for the recognition of the "Confederated States," but he will find no party or government there to recognize a Nation based on slavery.

What's the Score?

Much heavy stuff we read
In Winter time.
April is here;
A little rhyme.
And so the gentle poets bring
Their roundelays concerning Spring.

This warlike stuff, we find,
Is quite a strain.
It preys on every mind
And tires the brain.
A mental tonic cures the blues,
And now we want some baseball news.
—Washington (D. C.) Herald.

Don't Kiss Children, a Queen's Idea.

Boston Globe.

Queen Victoria of Spain, it is said, is responsible for the anti-kissing-of-children idea. The Queen objected to her three children being kissed by court attendants desirous of showing their loyalty. Tags have just arrived in this country bearing the Spanish equivalent for the words "do not kiss me." The labels are in Spanish because of the origin of the idea. Europe, as a result of the move, is making a campaign against promiscuous kissing of children.

A Spring Poem.

National Magazine.

An apple blossom—just awake to life;
The sun, the wind, two enemies at strife;
The apple-blossom's heart, the prize to be,
For him who gained the early victory.

Then wind, with eager accents, loud and strong,
Approached the blossom with his lover's song.
He tried to break the petals from their hold
So closely on the blossom's heart of gold.
But all in vain—the more he puffed and blew,
The blossom her pink petals closer drew.

Then sun came out so gently and so warm,
The blossom knew that he could bring no harm.
His brightest rays he sent, his warmest kiss,
Which thrilled each petal pink with rosy bliss.
And, blushingly, her petals fell apart,
And to the sun revealed her golden heart.

But wind was not content to loser be,
And he began to laugh in mockery,
Ruthlessly he tore the petals from their stem—
Flung them upon a breeze, and captured them!
But there remained what wind had never won—
The blossom's heart, still golden in the sun!—