

The Oregonian

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Portland, Tuesday, Feb. 13, 1912.

WHY PENSIONS FINCH?

The strange feature of extravagant pension legislation is that it should be enacted by Congress despite the fact that it is not approved by the people of the United States, who must foot the bill. There is no favorable word anywhere for the Sherwood \$1-a-day bill, except among the pensioners and other beneficiaries, and among the politicians. Not an important newspaper anywhere, so far as the Oregonian is concerned, justifies the sweeping Sherwood measure; not any body of citizens or any organization, or class, or interest, or group, except the men who have their own reasons for opening wide the doors of the Treasury.

The United States Senate committee rejects the Sherwood bill, which would add \$50,000,000 to \$75,000,000 annually to the great pension burden; but it favors the Smoot bill, appropriating about \$2,000,000 annually. Pensions now aggregate \$162,000,000 annually; but it is inevitable that the pressure will force greater sums than ever from the people.

A Democratic House passes hastily and without apology the Sherwood bill; but it then becomes panic-stricken in a paroxysm of economy and proposes to retrench by limiting the appropriations for rivers and harbors, and public buildings.

Millions, millions and more millions for pensions, but not a cent for public buildings, or new river or harbor projects. That is the Democratic programme. No \$1,000,000 for a new Portland postoffice; none for Astoria, or Baker, or The Dalles, or any of the Oregon cities. No money for Tillamook, Astoria, or Coos Bay, Clifton Harbor, and Willapa Harbor.

We are a generous Nation, but there is a time when generosity is imprudence, stagnation and starvation.

HOW TO SAVE \$7,500,000.

The purpose of this article is to show how Multnomah County could save its immediately tributary county in road building to the same extent that Governor West's high finance scheme would help that territory and yet save the taxpayers of Multnomah County \$7,500,000. By Portland's immediate territory we mean a district extending to Seaside on the west, Hood River on the east, and Salem on the south. The suggestion is not to be offered as a substitute for the West bill, but wholly as an illustration of their injustice.

A very fair statement of what the West bills provide was that prepared by C. T. Prall, president of the Oregon Association for Highway Improvement, and published in The Oregonian Monday. We do not dispute his statement of facts, but we do question the worth of his conclusions. Indeed, we are prone to believe that President Prall never calculated the expenditures and receipts of the Willamette Valley counties, else he would not have used the argument he did to use the appropriation money for the highway fund bill. To refresh the memory of the reader, we quote what he says on this subject:

about 35 per cent of the state's taxes. It would contribute toward the \$50,000,000 bond principal and interest involved in the state road scheme the sum of \$17,500,000. To be exact, it may be stated that the difference is \$7,765,105.

Let the reader not infer, however, that each of the eight counties would profit by the state bond issue. Washington, Clackamas and Marion would pay more to the state than they would pay in principal almost its exact apportionment from the fund. The only three counties in Portland's immediate territory that would get outside help would be Yamhill, Hood River and Columbia.

The Oregonian would not object to Multnomah County giving a reasonable amount of aid to the Valley counties in road building, but are Hood River, Yamhill and Columbia any more entitled to Multnomah's aid than Washington, Clatsop, Clallam, Cowlitz, Lewis and Clark, and Tillamook? Is there any justice in requiring Washington County to help pay for roads in neighboring Yamhill County or to give Hood River County \$500,000 for road building and at the same time charge against Clackamas \$445,000 for roads in other counties? Isn't it about time the road bill advocates came back to earth?

THE LAW AND THE POOR MAN.

Governor West tells the Portland Labor Council that he opposes capital punishment because in its practical operation the poor man is hanged and the rich man is not hanged. The motive of the Governor in making this astounding argument in the manner and in the place it was made needs no special illumination. But it is suggestive to find in this same connection the following from the Salem Capital Journal, published at the seat of the State Penitentiary:

The wealthy banker should not be paroled, but should be made to serve his full term in the State Prison with the poor and unfortunate. The get-rich-quick banker and embezzler who has made his money by the sale of stock at the highest price, and enters prison for a term of years, should be made to serve his full term in the State Prison with the poor and unfortunate.

He is allowed to go to Portland and live by the month in his hotel, and every fortnight he is brought to Salem, handcuffed and attended by sheriff's deputies, and is thrown into the State Prison under the name of a convict.

He is garbed in prison clothes, set to work to build roads or perform hard labor in any part of the state he goes with the badge of convict, and his wages are sent to his family.

The people will approve of humane treatment of the poor man, but where that treatment comes to be punishment in any form, they will not approve of it.

The rich murderer is not executed; therefore nobody should be executed. The poor man is made to go to prison for his crimes, while the rich man in prison is treated with favoritism and indulgence; therefore nobody should go to prison. Because the law is poorly enforced, the remedy is no law, and no-law enforcement. What miserable synchpansy, pitiful sentimentalism!

HANDLING MEXICO.

In his handling of the Mexican situation, President Taft has displayed fairness, laudable patience and humanitarianism. His attitude has epitomized the truly American spirit of broad justice and fair play.

Other nations would have taken over such opportunities for exploitation of the Mexicans, but President Taft has been abounding in actual and potential wealth.

Because of the Monroe Doctrine it falls to us to keep the hot-blooded primitive peoples to our south within bounds. The surest, swiftest way in the Mexican difficulty would be by force of arms. But to have the strength attribute that is largely characteristic of the American people. President Taft's policy in the Mexican situation proves him the embodiment of what is biggest and best in our National makeup.

Twice, now, the bad boy has been shown up. Will it have to be applied before he quits his disgraceful caper?

with that of the railroads and that the extensions which they need can only be secured by making railroad investments attractive to capital. Government ownership of railroads is getting farther away instead of nearer.

OUR WRETCHED SCHOOLS.

After perusing what The Oregonian had to say about its jeremiad against the public schools, the Medford Mail-Tribune grows more tearful than ever. Worse still, it loses its temper and actually calls us "an old story of journalism." Having thus relieved its mind, the Mail-Tribune returns to the assault on the schools.

"Few of the Oregonians of today were in Oregon twenty years ago," it tells us, "and so they cannot compare the schools of today with those of that period. But they can compare the school system of today with the school system of that period." The issue is not how perfect the schools are today, but how perfect they were in Oregon twenty years ago, the present output averages poorly when compared with the output of Eastern schools twenty years ago.

When compared with what they were twenty years ago, how imperfect they are when compared with the schools of other states. This is the way our contemporary argues the case, and we must say that it is a bad one.

Not that the argument itself is altogether disreputable. It has some merit. The difficulty is that our esteemed contemporary has resorted to a pettifogger's trick, which is entirely unworthy of a newspaper publisher. The school system of today is not as good as the school system of twenty years ago, but it is not as bad as the school system of twenty years ago.

Now comes our bewildering contemporary and declares that "few of the Oregonians of today were in Oregon twenty years ago, and so they cannot compare the schools of today with those of that period." Tut, tut. That is precisely what the Mail-Tribune undertook to do and what we gently rebuked it for doing incorrectly. We hope we shall not find occasion to rebuke it for disingenuousness in its future references to this little difference of opinion.

A FEW VISIONS-DISELLED.

The Oregonian's forecast of the result of the Presidential election, based on the political complexion of the states, not only in 1910, but in prior elections, is disappointing to the Olympia Standard, but that is not surprising. The Standard is one of those ever-hopeful Democratic sheets which base predictions of the result of a Presidential election on results of state elections in an off year.

Almost every normally Republican state has elected a Democratic Governor in 1910 has done the same in former off years, but has returned to the Republican column in the succeeding election. That the election of a Governor is considered by thousands of voters as having no bearing on that of a President is proved by the action of Ohio in electing Harmon, a Democrat, Governor in 1908 on the same day that it voted by a large majority for Taft for President. Harmon's re-election is more evidence of Ohio's attitude on the Presidency than was his election in 1908.

Chamberlain's election as Governor of Oregon in 1906 would, in the Standard's estimation, have justified the conclusion that Bryan would carry the state in 1908, though the election of two Republican Governors at the same time might have suggested caution. But we all know how Taft swept Oregon in 1908, and the election of West, therefore, does not cause Republicans any anxiety as to the result in 1912. New York did not even wait till the Presidential year to elect a Republican Governor, but from the Democratic fold in 1910 was but temporary, for the Republicans were again put in control of the Legislature in 1911. New Jersey did likewise. If the Standard chooses to nourish hopes that the other normally Republican states which elected Democratic Governors in 1910 will remain Democratic, it is welcome to do so, but we venture to disagree with it, even at the risk of being called an audacious dissembler.

Any man of ordinary perception who has watched political events knows that the vote is not in the independence of off years, but returns to their political faith in Presidential elections—when the principles of their party are really at stake. They are growing more independent at all times, but are far more disposed to keep in line when the Presidency is at issue than in other years.

CALLS, RECALLS AND THE LIKE.

How to Read Voice of People Puzzles Correspondent in Salem.

SALEM, Ore., Feb. 11.—(To the Editor.)—I have long had aspirations for public office and dreams of power, and last night I dreamed that I heard the great voice of the great American people calling and calling to me to be President of the United States. The voice seemed to grow louder and louder until suddenly I awoke and found that the noise I heard was my dog howling.

I went out to see what was the matter, but all was dark and I could see nothing. As the dog was making a horrible noise, I gave him a kick and told him to be quiet. But this morning I saw by the tracks that a coyote had been in my henhouse and gotten 14 chickens.

I wish someone would prescribe a formula telling the difference between the howling of his dog at night and the call from the public to be President. I don't know what the answer would be like, but if I ever do hear it, I don't want to miss it.

It occurs to me, also, that along with election time a great confusion of calls arises and it must be very hard for each obliging, public-spirited politician to tell just which office it is that he is called to, and which dog-catcher in which he is needed.

It is also strange how few politicians hear rightly when the public is calling on them to retire or keep out at election time. They always think the call is meant for some one else.

In regard to distinguishing which office is called to, wouldn't it be a good idea to amend the constitution so as to allow every candidate to run for as many offices as he wanted to, and then to take his choice. If two or more candidates got the same office, they could draw straws to see which got it.

When I call to retirement, I don't know of any way a man can know it except by experience. Perhaps someone can give some advice on that point.

Z. M. CHASE.

BUTTERINE IS NOT UNHEALTHFUL.

Writer Upholds Use of Manufactured Butter in Asylum.

GRANTS PASS, Ore., Feb. 11.—(To the Editor.)—In their agitation against the use of butterine at the State Insane Hospital the dairymen are wholly unreasonable.

If there was an overproduction of butter, or even a sufficient production of it, our state might be helped. It is not argued that the use of butterine was destroying the butter market in part, but when Oregon's butter is so abundant in quantity that it must be imported from other states, wherein lies the injury to our dairymen through use of a substitute at Salem?

The statement of an official of the Oregon Creamery Company that butterine is not suitable for use in the insane hospital is ridiculous. True, the insane are mentally ill, but only a small percentage are physically weakened, and the large majority are healthy. It is an animal product, but so is butter, and I will venture to assert that butterine is cleaner, purer and manufactured under better conditions than most creamery butter.

I know the creamery business and have seen the butter substitute manufactured, though having no interest in either line at present.

J. A. ROGERS.

Pharmacies in Politics.

PORTLAND, Feb. 12.—(To the Editor.)—Modesty seems to be entirely overshadowed by the self-laudation of the egotistic office-seekers of the present day.

It is really nauseating to read the platform of the self-seeking candidate following his announcement of purpose to be a candidate in response to the urgent request of many fellow citizens. Promising to be good, to be kind and to be honest in all that he does, and to be as honest as the angels in heaven.

What a man has done and his capacity to do, as gauged by those who have known him in the past, is the best test of his character. The tendency of the times seems to be a breaking away from permanent forms of government, founded upon experience and wisdom, and a turning to the unstable and whimsical excitement of the rabble led by soap-box orators and curbsome philosophers.

Most candidates announce themselves as Republicans, and then with the blare of trumpets enunciate as the platform statement No. 1, initiative, referendum, injunction and recall, and the most progressive. There are two modes of progress; the common crawl and the high jump. The high jump is a practice both, sometimes forward and sometimes backward. In Oregon it is the high jump.

Signatures to Roosevelt petitions appear to be hard to get. If Colonel Hester were given big eagle rank, he would be a great help. The order of the eagle rank, near-politicians would rather scatter.

Half a Century Ago

From The Oregonian of February 13, 1862.

When, about a half-century ago, occurred Sunday evening, January 19, the rebels were repulsed and hotly pursued by General Thomas to their encampment at Mills Springs, 25 miles from Thomas' position, where they crossed the Cumberland. Our forces followed up close to the enemy's trenches on the north bank of the river and lay in front of them all night, expecting to storm them in the morning, but in the night the enemy managed to go across the river in barges and boats. They left everything behind, including artillery, ammunition, horses, tents, quartermaster's commissary and medical.

The Federal troops took possession of the enemy's intrenchments early Monday morning. On the battlefield, after the rebels fled, 200 dead and wounded were picked up and among them General Zollicoffer. They were found mortally wounded in a wagon. Our loss is not definitely known, but is estimated at 1,000 men. The entire rebel loss was 275 killed, Kentucky and Cumberland Gap are now open for our troops to march into East Tennessee.

Chicago, Jan. 12.—The Cincinnati Gazette has news that on Monday last Humphrey Marshall's troops being cornered by Colonel Garfield's forces, had every man killed and disarmed. They burned everything they had except cannon.

Advices from Mexico state that country is making immense preparations to oppose the allied fleet. Over 100,000 men will be in the field soon.

General Grant and staff embarked on the steamer Chancellor this morning for Fort Jackson, La. General Grant, General McClellan leads the advance. General Grant says he shall march 30 miles tomorrow. A battle is not far off.

Chicago, Jan. 16.—Edward M. Stanton was yesterday confirmed Secretary of War.

New York, Jan. 16.—The House committee on commerce has under consideration a proposition to establish a mail line of steamers from California to Japan, China and the East Indies. General Ward, from the committee, is preparing an elaborate report favorable to it.

The forces under Generals Grant and Smith are at Cairo and Paducah, Kentucky, and are now moving on to Paducah. The forces of the Confederates are now in Kentucky and are now in Kentucky.

Chicago, Jan. 17.—News from Fort Leavenworth says that Indian Indians in the Cherokee country were attacked on the 6th inst. by superior forces of Texas rangers. The Indians were compelled to retreat and are now in Kansas.

The Happy Season

By Dean Collins.

Not long until the breath of Spring Will sigh across our greening hills And poets will burst forth in songs To pay their Spring house-cleaning bills!

And round the merry breakfast board A second time our cups will pass, To quaff the pink and tonic juice Distilled from bark of assafras!

And, as the swallows northward fly, Joy will illumine the public glim, To see the baseball players flit To southward camps to get in trim.

I would not mock the gridiron game, Nor yet of bowling be a knocker; I would not scoff at basketball, Nor scorn the man who plays at soccer; Still, all these brief and transient sports, That men in Winter time engage, Seem but a weary round of dope To fill a solemn sporting page; Until the weary months have flown And, when the merry Spring is here, The baseball teams come out again And we have really something doing.

So sweet to me will be the time When everywhere the bock again buds, That certain harbinger of Spring, That blossoms o'er the hall of youth, Sweet to the time when youthful hopes Play hockey, and with balls and bats Pervade the streets and vacant lots, And their finger joints and slats; For this will mean that soon we'll hear, On every side, the country o'er, A Spring song that is far more sweet Than Mendelssohn's—"Say, what's the score?"

Country Town Sayings by Ed Howe

What has become of the old-fashioned man who claimed he was poor because he could not pay a security debt?

I prefer a dog that bites, if sufficiently provoked, to one that barks all night at false alarms.

The one thing that may be depended upon in all men all the time is that they will promptly take an interest in reforming other men's morals and business affairs.

A rooster crows because he hears other roosters crow. But what starts the first rooster in the morning?

When your time comes, a sudden death, a long illness, a sudden death, a consultation of doctors, and morphine to give those in the house a little rest.

It must require a good deal of nerve for a man to decide that he is the most undesirable candidate for President of the United States, and that he can get the office.

People in this country have a tremendous amount of liberty. In the town where I live, a negro woman was at liberty to sue the estate of a white man, 15 years after his death, and to get the claim that she was his common-law wife.

When a jury brings in a verdict of not guilty, people generally say: "I bet he was."

If you can do a creditable thing well, people will admit it; they may admit it grudgingly, but they will admit it.

Why Not Jack Johnson River? OREGONIAN, Feb. 9.—(To the Editor.)—I take the liberty of expressing concurrence with the views contained in a contribution signed "Fairplay" in The Oregonian, February 8.

The article concerns the sentiment in regard to changing the majestic Mount Hood to "Mount Jim Hill." Let us welcome such a change if only for the sake of euphony.

The only objection that I can foresee in Jim Hill is so numerous that posterity will wonder whether the regal mountain was named after Jim Hill, a peanut vendor, or Jim Hill, a financier.

We are engaged in finding more mellifluous names for the mountains that we do not neglect the rivers. How much easier is it to change a name than to speak of the Bill Smith River in lieu of the Columbia River? And we would surely recognize the gentle Willamette under the name of, say, the Jack Johnson River. Our day river has already been scientifically treated.

A WORSHIPPER OF THE GOLDEN CALF.

Engineers Not Made by Law. HUBBARD, Ore., Feb. 9.—(To the Editor.)—Under the heading "Roller Expositions and Amusements," The Oregonian, February 6, says: "For the safety of the public we need a law providing for examination and licensing of engineers in charge of carnivals."

To my mind such a law would only add to an overburdened list of state officials, with meager results. The writer is a known man who could give the written answers to every question in the Steam User's Guide who, when it came to a "showdown" were not worth kicking out of the way. In a recent address at a teachers' meeting, Professor Ackerman held out the idea that our public school teachers should be made by law. They are not made by experience with teachers, but the fact remains that engineers are not made in that way.

J. S. YODER.

Leap Years. PORTLAND, Ore., Feb. 9.—(To the Editor.)—Does Leap Year occur every four years, or does it vary? MRS. L. Y. B.

Century years are the exception. They must be divisible by 400 to be leap years. For example, 1900 was not a leap year, although divisible by four.