

The Oregonian

Entered at Portland, Oregon, Postoffice as Second-Class Matter, February 22, 1881. Postoffice No. 107. Published daily, except on Sundays and public holidays. Subscription price, in Advance, \$1.00 per Annum.

Daily, Sunday included, one year, \$1.00. Daily, Sunday included, six months, \$0.50. Daily, Sunday included, three months, \$0.25. Daily, without Sunday, one year, \$0.75. Daily, without Sunday, six months, \$0.40. Daily, without Sunday, three months, \$0.20. Weekly, one year, \$0.50. Weekly, six months, \$0.25. Weekly, three months, \$0.15. Sunday and Weekly, one year, \$0.50.

Portland, Friday, October 4, 1912.

THE PUZZLING THIRTY-EIGHT.

In response to an invitation issued by The Oregonian to any person who has reached a conclusion as to each of the thirty-eight measures submitted to the voters to describe the process by which he reached those conclusions and to advise his fellow-electors, "One Voter" writes to The Oregonian today.

These are his conclusions, as we understand them:

(1) If the voter desires to discourage overseas of the initiative, he may safely vote "no" on every initiative measure and "yes" on every referendum.

(2) Consideration of the measures may be simplified by grouping them into tax measures, road measures, bills to restrain labor and restrict the initiative, and measures that are miscellaneous in character.

(3) All or most tax measures are bad. The harmony road bills are the travesties and coeys of the Grand road bills. The referred measures are simple. The miscellaneous measures are fairly well indicated in their titles.

In his summary "One Voter" has not fully accepted the invitation of The Oregonian. He does not give his process of reasoning nor tell whether he obtained his information from the pamphlet or other sources. He gives only one or two specific conclusions and offers no positive advice.

His suggestion that no particular harm will be done by defeat of all initiative measures and the sustaining of the Legislature is not a very brilliant suggestion. Nevertheless, it is an undesirable course of action for the voter to take, and would defeat its own purpose. Some of the measures are constitutional amendments that cannot be adopted without the approval of the voters. Intention of maintaining the initiative and the referendum to women, and the amendment abolishing capital punishment, is simple and each may be readily identified on the ballot.

There is no reason why the voters should not express their honest opinion on these subjects. The Legislature is now empowered by authority to enact laws relating to tax regulations or exemptions. Such laws must go to vote of the people. To prevent overburdening of the ballot in future this power ought to be restored to the Legislature. Rebuke of misuse of the initiative will not be complete unless the amendment in article IX, part of section 1, article IX, is adopted. Defeat of this amendment will result in repetition of initiative abuses. It is numbered 308 yes; 309 no.

The consolidation of cities and the division of counties are in much the same tangle as tax regulation. The Legislature has been deprived of the power to join cities or create new counties. The people may do so by initiative, but the initiative bills must go before the voters of the entire state. Yet such bills are local in character and presented with eight or nine such measures. This year one is in the list. A bill (343 yes) provides for local settlement of such issues. Its approval will relieve the general ballot of unnecessary measures in the future.

On the whole, we think it undesirable, therefore, to associate simply as a rebuke of defeat of all attempts at legislative legislation. Fundamental and elemental measures and those that would tend to prevent misuse of the initiative hereafter should be thoroughly and conscientiously considered. On others the rebuke may be properly applied.

Nor do we agree with the conservative that all the miscellaneous measures are fairly well indicated in the titles. The amendment that would abolish the Legislature and provide proportional representation is a notable exception. The title contains the full legal limit of 100 words. It was full legal limit of 100 words. It was full legal limit of 100 words.

Public acquirement of public utilities. Extension of municipal power of eminent domain. Abolishment of Governor's veto power.

Three-fourths vote of Legislature to repeal or amend initiative measures. Three-fourths vote of the Legislature to declare an emergency.

Restriction of the power of the Governor. Inhibition against creating legislative commissions to propose initiative measures. Special elections for filling vacancies in office of Governor.

Five years' residence qualification for members of Legislature. There are numerous important and fundamental changes proposed in this amendment in addition to the nine given above and the thirteen enumerated in the title. The arguments in the pamphlet do not discuss all of them. Therefore the voter can gain no information, for example, as to the meaning of the section devoted to eminent domain. Certainly this amendment is not fairly indicated in the title, but through no fault of the Attorney-General. It cannot be fairly indicated in 100 words.

The Oregonian would still like to hear from some voter, not a professional law tinker, who has formed a conclusion as to every measure to be voted on and who can advise the ordinary voter how to acquire the same admirable frame of mind.

The current number of the Pilot Rock Record has a variety of interesting political articles, including an editorial (one and one-half columns) criticizing The Oregonian for saying that the opinion of Eastern newspapers generally is in favor of the Maine election propped victory for the Democrats in

November, lampooning the Democratic party, eulogizing Roosevelt and lauding Taft. Another article (three-fourths column) supports the protective tariff and explains why Roosevelt is not exactly right when he pronounced the Payne-Aldrich act the "best tariff ever." Other articles of varying size, but all of abounding interest, show why Roosevelt, and not Taft nor Wilson, should be elected President. The Record has the true system. It shines for all.

GOOD BILL IN WRONG PLACE.

—The "blue sky" law, which you oppose, is one of the very best measures to come before the people. No honest man can possibly be harmed by it. It will banish the crooked promoter from Oregon, and will help to bring in the law. REV. J. H. BIRNEY.

—Thus we hear from a first-rate citizen, who has the general interest much in mind and renders much unselfish and useful public service. If such men are to encourage the promiscuous use of the initiative, and the abandonment of the historic constitutional method of legislation, for the enactment of purely miscellaneous laws, how is representative government to be restored?

The "blue sky" law is a good bill, undoubtedly. The Oregonian approves its purpose and is in accord with many of its provisions. The fake stock promoter ought to go. This bill aims to drive him out or put him in jail.

But we are not unmindful that this particular measure authorizes an expenditure of \$20,000 to \$25,000 annually, creates a fine new \$200 job for somebody and the the scheme of somebody else. But who is somebody, and who is somebody, though his motives may be, and doubtless are, entirely worthy.

This bill, and all similar bills, belong to the Legislature. It has never been offered to the Legislature. Is there any fear that it will not pass? We suppose so. But why not try? Thereafter an appeal to the initiative may be justifiable.

BOBARK'S FIGHT IN IDAHO.

Senator Bobark is facing in Idaho, in his campaign for re-election, a situation of difficulty and perplexity, with a rare degree of candor and courage. Because he was for Roosevelt before the National convention, the uncompromising Roosevelt followers insist that he must declare for Roosevelt now; because Taft was nominated at Chicago, the regular Republicans declare that he must now be for Taft.

The Senator refuses to ride with either faction; but he states exactly where he stands—in the middle of the road—and he tells the Republicans of Idaho to defeat him if they prefer some other at Washington. But he says also:

When I am violating no confidence when I am following no precedent, when I am requested to join him in the third party, I said that I would not join him. I did not propose to leave the Republican party. I made up my mind in good faith that I would not change it. Regardless of what happens I propose to stay in the party within and out of the Republican party.

A smaller man than Bobark would have great trouble in maintaining himself before the contentions of faction and the disputes of partisans. Yet Idaho needs Bobark at Washington. The Republican party needs him, and the Nation needs him. Idaho will hardly make the mistake of defeating him.

A DANIEL COME TO JUDGMENT.

The Los Angeles judge who prefers the welfare of families to that of loan sharks merits the commendation of good citizens. His name, James H. Hall, deserves to be known in the Hall of Fame, to be more than some judge who is there already. The case which he decided in favor of a wife and her children against a gang of loan sharks concerned one of the city employes.

This not very exemplary person seems to have been divorced by his wife and ordered by the court to pay her maintenance for a month. Without regard to this obligation he fell into debt to the money lenders, who sought to garnish his salary and thus deprive his family of their dues.

Judge Monroe decided that the garnishment would not hold, so that the divorced wife gets her allowance as she ought, but in spite of his decree the loan sharks will probably not go begging as they ought. Much of the machinery of the law pays too little regard to the welfare of wives and children. It is devised upon the theory that a man's family is constructively implicated in his guilt when he commits an offense and ought therefore to suffer with him, or often in his stead.

Chinese law carries this outrageous theory to the length of making the whole village where a criminal lives responsible for his crime. Our law, reasonable for his part, went quite so far in the past, but there was a time in England when even felon forfeited his property and his family had to go to the poorhouse. The reason why Giles Corey allowed himself to be pressed to death rather than testify was he was accused of witchcraft at Salem and he remained silent because he could not be convicted. As it was, his family inherited his property. Had he been convicted of witchcraft, it would have been a felony in those good old ages of faith, they would have lost everything.

The law has passed out of this enormity, but we still keep men idle in prison while their wives take in washing to prevent the children from starving. Some states actually farm out convicts to corporations and at the same time support their families. Common sense would counsel such states to collect as high wages as possible for their work and turn the proceeds over to the suffering family, but common sense and law are two very different things.

WATER ROUTES AS REGULATORS.

The business policy according to which, for the sake of a little temporary, immediate gain, Portland merchants allow the water companies to team up in business to troop and die is a penny-wise and pound-foolish policy. It has become a trite saying that water routes are valuable as a regulator of railroad rates. So they are, provided the regulator is kept well oiled and in good working order. If it is allowed to become rusty from disuse, with no man at hand to operate it, such a regulator invites the contempt of those whom it is designed to regulate.

Even though our chief reliance for transportation facilities between our two coasts should continue to be on the railroad, it would pay our merchants to give steamship lines enough business to justify their owners in continuing operation. This would be just as sound policy as it is to carry fire insurance and to maintain water and fire departments. Such a policy would ward off evils as sure to befall the shipper as fire is sure to ruin the

man who carries no insurance in a city devoid of fire protection. But our chief reliance should not be on the railroads. It has been often said that the water routes are the arteries of the Pacific Coast are doing business through their back doors. Our front door opens on the ocean, our back door on the land. We should gather commodities by rail from the interior in small lots and send them out by steamer in large lots. We should receive them from abroad and from the Eastern seaboard in large lots by steamer and distribute them in small lots through the back country by rail. The railroads should be the feeders and tributaries of the water routes. The great cities of past and present times have been and are those which turned their faces, not their backs, to the sea. Such were and are Carthage, Tyre, Venice, Genoa, Amsterdam, Antwerp, London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Hamburg, Hong Kong, New York, and the other New Orleans. When Carthage and Tyre lost their mastery of the sea, they decayed and died, so that they have become but a memory, and Venice is but a relic of past glory.

ROOSEVELT'S TEST.

Confirmation of La Follette's charge that "How do you stand on ME?" is Roosevelt's sole test of qualification for a Progressive in a correspondence which has passed between Wallace Batchelder, of Bethel, Vermont, and Theodore Roosevelt. Mr. Batchelder was one of Roosevelt's Rough Riders in 1898 and supported him in the primary campaign for the Republican nomination. On July 29 he received the following telegram from Roosevelt:

We cannot endorse any candidate of either party who will not support Roosevelt electors in the coming campaign. If you do not support in this matter, I cannot support you.

Having confirmed the authenticity of this telegram, Mr. Batchelder replied in part as follows: I supposed that I was fighting for the real rule of the people and against bosses and bores. My telegram was not in every state that we must not vote for any candidate for office, and I am not a candidate. I am a progressive, he may be, unless that candidate will agree to pay for our votes.

With grief, the depth of which you cannot know, I have decided, after much thought, that I cannot longer support you for President of the United States.

The only bosses whom Roosevelt condemns are those who oppose him. He sets himself up as the Progressive boss and those Progressives who resent bossism from any quarter whatever, simply because it is bossism, not because it is anti-Roosevelt bossism, find themselves constrained to oppose the third-term candidate, though often with grief, as Mr. Batchelder does.

READING FOR BUSY MEN.

A writer in an Eastern contemporary, discarding agreeably through a column the other day on the subject of "Reading for Busy Men." His purpose was to make out a case for big books. He represented the busy man as a man who has no time to read, and collections of choice extracts from illustrious writers and urged everybody, even the busiest of busy men, to choose some elaborate work and go through it from beginning to end. In fact he had persuaded himself that this plan of reading would be a good thing for the "business man," because it would bring him into prolonged intimacy with a great author and open out new horizons to his thought. In support of his advice he quoted President Butler, of Columbia University, who bemoaned his young students for failing to read, to pass the year in company with some one high and noble character."

Perhaps the ideal way to make Dr. Butler's sage counsel available would be to fill the chairs of his university with "high and noble characters," among whom each student might choose his guide, his student and his friend for the year. But there appears to be a lamentable disparity between supply and demand in this direction and for lack of living mentors he referred the young men to the dead writers of books. Tennyson, or his revelation in verse, Dr. Butler thought, would make a good associate for a year. So would Emerson, Lord Morley or Pasteur. Some timorous persons might object to this exclusive devotion of college students to a single author, however well chosen, but such fears do not trouble us. Let President Butler persuade as he may, his young men will read, and they will read in the direction of their own interests. If the ordinary college man could be charmed by some magician into a real fondness for any book whatever, long or short, ancient or modern, it would be a decided gain for his whole year. It is a counsel of perfection which a chosen few may perhaps follow, but the giddy multitude will be sure to disregard it.

Most busy men who read anything at all besides the newspapers do it for information. They wish to keep themselves from being run over by the daily routine by acquaintance with the thought of the world, its inventions and social reforms. They care nothing for literary style. Indeed, few of them can tell the difference between the best style in the world and the worst as far as content is concerned. All that tells what they want to know concisely and clearly is the one that suits them, no matter with what genius or lack of genius it may be written. It is this demand for current information which the editor of the "Life of Frederick" is trying to meet. He can give in enough extracts from Tennyson, Emerson and their kind to understand at least why they are called great.

On the other hand, if a busy man confines his reading to a big work like Carlyle's "Life of Frederick," he will gain and lose. He will gain familiarity with the workings of a great mind. He will learn to appreciate one or more of the masterpieces of human achievement. He will become intimately acquainted with a new and marvelous world. But, on the other hand, it will not be the world he lives in. The more closely he applies his brief daily leisure to Carlyle or Gibbon the farther he must withdraw from the interests of struggling men, from the life and movements of his time. Here, as everywhere else, the "Decline and Fall" is the choice sacrifice of something desirable.

The masher gets cold comfort, whichever way he turns.

that one choice is better than the other. The tendency of modern specialists is not to broaden the minds of their votaries. On the contrary, it swings toward specialization. In the large corporations each man gravitates to a particular department and lodges there permanently. Lawyers select some branch of their profession, such as wills or abstracts of title, and pay little attention to the rest. In medicine it has become a habit of approach to call a man a "general practitioner." With this narrowing of vocation necessarily goes a narrowing of interest in life and a loss of human sympathy unless by resolute effort the withering process is checked.

It cannot be checked by exclusive devotion to a single book or author. Since business tends inevitably toward monotony, a man who would save himself from intellectual and spiritual desiccation must seek variety in his recreation. He must read as many books as he can even at the risk of shallowness. Try as we may, none of us can go very deeply into more than one or two intellectual lines.

Chemistry has become a necessary handmaiden of business. From steel manufacture to farming, it plays an important part in all branches of industry. Its most recent achievements are the making of artificial rubber, which is said to mean that we shall soon be able to buy automobile tires at one-fourth their present price, and the fixation of atmospheric nitrogen, which will supply air nitrates as a fertilizer when the present supply of manure and fertilizer is exhausted. Dr. Raymond F. Bacon says this discovery means that our sons and grandsons will surely have something to eat. As fast as some natural product approaches exhaustion, the chemist invents an artificial substitute, which is "just as good," as the grocer often says.

Stefansson, the Arctic explorer, is anxious that the white Eskimo be discovered and protected from civilization. He desires that white men's food, white men's clothes, white men's houses, white men's diseases be kept away from the Eskimo. He desires that the Eskimo be left to his own devices, that he be left to the fate of the Mackenzie Basin, which has been reduced from 2000 to 49 since 1848. If we could take all parts of civilization to primitive people and if such people would as readily assimilate the good as the bad, it might not prove so injurious. But the many parts of civilization are usually first to take root in new countries and even when the better side is presented the natives take more kindly to the evil.

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BETTER AND MORE PLAYGROUNDS

Montgomery Tract Suggested for Things Impracticable in Hill Parks.

PORTLAND, Oct. 3.—(To the Editor.)—The article which appeared in The Oregonian October 1 under caption "Children Enjoy Parks" permits me to draw attention to the attention of the Park Board and the citizens of Portland to the inadequacy of public grounds in this city suitably equipped as parks and playgrounds. It must be admitted that the city is not fair-minded and public-spirited citizens, particularly by those who have traveled all over the world and seen the few we have are primitive in the extreme when compared with the highly developed grounds of this character in other cities.

Where is there a public park worthy of the name in the City of Portland, where our boys can gather and engage in the healthful game of baseball? Where is there a public ground where our boys and girls can assemble and engage in the healthful game of basketball, or in the healthful game of football, or in the healthful game of tennis, or in the healthful game of croquet, or in the healthful game of other exhilarating exercises? Or where is there a public ground where a sprinting or cycling course is maintained or where a younger generation can engage in the healthful game of various kinds, such as goals and ponies in charge of a keeper for children to ride; shallow water ponds for sailing; and a public ground for the healthful game of baseball?

What we want and what we sorely need, in order to advance from the rear rank among cities in this respect and to give our children the same number of ball diamonds and tennis courts can be maintained in certain sections of the grounds for these sections. The grounds for these sections should be made of a material that will last a long time. The material should be of a material that will last a long time. The material should be of a material that will last a long time.

It appears that in selecting grounds for public park purposes in Portland the selections have been made with the sole idea of developing a garden spot. True our parks are beauty spots, but our most urgent need, viz: an extensive playground, has been utterly overlooked.

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