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PORTLAND, TUESDAY, FEB. 16, 1915.

OUR CONCERN IN THE NAVAL WAR.

The United States has been placed in a most delicate position by the attempt of Britain to starve out Germany and by the determination of Germany to retaliate by extending the naval war to all the coasts of the British Isles and to destroy British commerce, even at the risk of sinking neutral ships with their crews and passengers. As a man will resort to desperate means in the effort to escape starvation, so will a nation. An otherwise honest man will steal a loaf of bread to appease his hunger. Much more will a great nation believing that it fights for its life and is threatened with deprivation of food set at naught all principles of international law in its effort to procure food and in its determination to harm in every possible way the nation which prevents food from reaching it.

In defense of her announced purpose, Germany accuses Britain of violating the declaration of London, but that declaration has never become operative, not having been ratified by Britain or the United States. Germany offers to meet the objection of Britain to any importations of food to Germany—namely, that the government food monopoly renders probable its use by the armed forces—by permitting its sale to civilians under supervision of American consular officers. Here enters the question of good faith. Thus a situation threatens in which war is to be carried on without regard to the rules of war, even to the point of killing by wholesale neutral sailors and passengers, for the simple reason that each belligerent charges the other with violation of those rules and therefore holds itself exonerated from observing them.

Germany might plausibly contend that the perfection to which she has brought the submarine and the conditions under which alone she can use such vessels have rendered the previously existing rules of warfare inapplicable to the present situation. She can make war on her enemy's commerce with submarines only, as the use of her surface ships would probably result in annihilation of her navy. To stop a ship and examine her papers and cargo, lest an innocent neutral with all on board be sunk, would defeat the purpose of using submarines, which is secrecy and security of movement. Hence submarines must take chances of injuring neutrals in order to make sure of striking the enemy. Yet the rules of war require search and examination of ship's cargo and papers. If the ship be a lawful prize and if she cannot be taken to port with safety to her captor, she may be sunk. That rule would permit a submarine to sink all her prizes. But the rules forbid drowning non-combatants or prisoners. A submarine cannot take them aboard, and has the alternative of abandoning her prize, sinking it with all on board, or compelling the crew to take to their boats. The third alternative involves delay and risk of discovery by the enemy.

Germany has not proclaimed a blockade, for she could not make it effective, and therefore other nations would not recognize it. Even if she had done so, she would be required to warn ships not to enter the forbidden waters and could seize and sink them only when they ignored the warning. The warning could only be given after a submarine had come to the surface and revealed its presence, which would be the height of rashness with British cruisers and destroyers hovering around. Hence Germany gives warning to the world's ships that British waters are a war area and that they will enter at their own peril, just as a civilian takes risks in entering the zone of fire between two contending armies.

The State Department did well to warn Germany of the danger that American indignation might break out against her if an American ship were to be sunk and if American lives were to be lost through attack by a German submarine. Since the attacking vessel would not show itself and would slink away under water, we should have no more proof that it was German than we had that a Spaniard sank the Maine. But an angry nation reaches its conclusion first and seeks grounds for it afterwards. The conclusion in such a case would be that a German submarine sank the ship, as the conclusion was that a Spaniard sank the Maine. With that thought in the public mind the atmosphere would be as explosive in 1915 as it was in 1898. This being the prospect, the utmost caution in avoiding cause of quarrel must be combined with the greatest firmness in upholding our rights if we are to keep out of the war and are at the same time to lose nothing which is rightfully ours.

THE MORGAN PORCELAINS.

The destiny of great art collections is to be sold and dispersed unless they belong to public museums. Even then they are not entirely secure, since an invading army may send them flying to some other quarter of the earth or destroy them utterly. Ultimately they will be destroyed like the great library at Alexandria and the shiploads of statuary and gems which the Romans undertook to transport from Corinth to Italy. No doubt by the time the Day of Judgment dawns most of the art treasures that we now value so highly will repose on the bottom of the sea. Some critics think that is the best place for them. Such iconoclasts regard collections of dead art as a distinct hindrance to the creative genius of the present day. Without pretending to pass judgment on a point so delicate we may witness the dispersal of the J. P. Morgan collection in New York in a mood of resignation. Some other millionaire will, in due time, gather most of the specimens together again and our children, or at least our grandchildren, will be privileged to see them again housed under a single roof.

There is a story that the Rockefellers have already bought this famous and expensive collection of porcelain. But it matters little what the purchaser's name may be. He is certain to appear in the fullness of time. Collecting is a passion that never dies out of the human breast. If a man has not money enough to amass precious porcelains he is fain to content himself with postage stamps or mushrooms. Anything will do. The passion is identical in all its forms. Mr. Morgan won bright glory by yielding to his bent for vases, while the modest philatelist is more than likely to be ridiculed. But at bottom their pursuits are closely akin. A small representative collection in any department of art is valuable for educational purposes. But immense museums full minister principally to vanity.

ABSTINENCE AND PROHIBITION.

The Oregonian would probably not be willing to admit that nobody needs any liquor as a beverage," remarks our all-dry friend, the McMinnville Telephone-Register. Yet The Oregonian will make unqualifiedly the statement that no one needs liquor as a beverage. It has said so many times.

But it is a lamentable fact that many people feel that they must have liquor and many others will have it whether they need it or not. There are still others who think that their "personal liberty" is ruthlessly invaded by prohibition and they deny vehemently the right of the state to interfere with their personal habits. Taken together, all these make a somewhat formidable group. They do not support prohibition but they, or most of them, will resist enforcement of a stringent prohibition law.

The duty of the Legislature is to pass an enforcible law. There is already a wide difference of opinion as to the House bill; yet it would appear that under the electric atmosphere of a radical prohibition sentiment, slyly stimulated by the "wet" forces, the Senate will probably follow in the footsteps of the House. There are several most obnoxious features in the law, and they will, in the opinion of The Oregonian, prove stumbling blocks in the way of its proper enforcement. That is what the anti-prohibitionists want. It seems also to be what the prohibitionists now are determined to have.

The most effective prohibition, under any law, is individual abstinence. There is nothing under any law, happily, to prevent any one practicing its virtues.

DEATH OF COLONEL JOHN M'CRAKEN.

In the death of Colonel McCraken Portland loses one of its oldest and best citizens. He had come here in pioneer days and had helped the city to grow from a frontier town to a splendid, modern city. He joined actively in every work for its upbuilding, both in a material, moral and intellectual sense. He served the Nation as United States Marshal, the state as Legislator and Quartermaster-General. He was one of the founders of the Portland Public Library, was a close student of Shakespeare and a promoter of the dramatic art, rose to the highest rank in Masonry and was a pillar of the Episcopal Church.

In his more than eighty-eight years of life Colonel McCraken won respect and affection by his sterling character, broad sympathies and public spirit. In his last illiness he had the satisfaction of being able to look back on a life which had made the world better through its having been lived. Of such men are great cities and great states composed.

FORTIFYING THE SPOILS SYSTEM.

Secretary Bryan professes a desire to increase the efficiency of the diplomatic and consular service, but he also expresses a desire to increase its "elasticity." This is a very elastic word, but what the Secretary meant by it was revealed in the House debate on a bill to improve the foreign service.

This bill classifies the offices of secretary of embassy or of legation and all consular offices and provides that appointments shall be made to those offices in general, power being vested in the President to make transfers, but the Senate inserted a proviso that no officer is to be transferred to a higher class except on nomination by the President and confirmation by the Senate.

As introduced in the Senate, the bill not only omitted this provision, but contained other provisions for examination as a condition of appointment and for the keeping of efficiency records as a guide to promotion from one class to another, which would have established by law the merit system, now existing only by executive order. The Senate not only left the merit system at the mercy of the President, but insisted on preserving a taint of the spoils system by making promotion or demotion subject to confirmation. On the plea that haste was necessary, the House committee insisted on passage of the bill as amended by the Senate. Thus the desired amount of elasticity will exist, for the President and his Secretary of State can appoint without examination and can, with the consent of the Senate, promote without regard to efficiency.

Representative Moore suggested that the kind of elasticity desired had been indicated by Mr. Bryan's notorious letter to Mr. Vick. Representative Flood replied with a frank indorsement of that letter, saying:

> It meets my hearty approval, and I believe it meets the approval of red-blooded party men in this country, Democrats or Republicans.

The "red-blooded party man," Representative Mann, dissented from that opinion, saying:

> That was not a case of getting Democrats jobs as against Republicans. It was a case of trying to exploit the people of another country in order to furnish ward workers for the Democratic party in this country. It was a case of trying to make the poor people of Santo Domingo pay the expenses—I will not say of the Democratic party, but of the political heelers of the Secretary of State.

House Democrats then fell back upon the plea that, if the amendments proposed in the interest of the merit system were adopted, the Senate would object in conference and the bill would fail. So these obstacles to elasticity were removed, and the executive orders, upon which alone the merit system how rests, may be revoked at any time when President Wilson finds them to be obstacles to his giving jobs to "deserving Democrats."

Dr. D. S. Jordan has revised his opinion of the French. They must be greatly comforted to learn that he no longer thinks them "decadent." France has certainly shown an astonishing renewal of vigor in the war. The despondency which hung like a cloud over the nation has lifted. We should not be surprised to see the new feeling affect the birth rate favorably.

"WHAT HARM CAN AMERICA DO?"

Although Germany may carry out her threat to blow up American ships attempting to navigate British waters, there is no probability that the event will lead to more than a diplomatic controversy growing out of an American demand for reparation. But our demand would have the more weight if Germany knew the United States had the force wherewith to back it. She knows we have not that force, for the Berlin Montag Zeitung, commenting on our protest against the German proclamation, asks: "What harm can America do Germany?" and continues:

> She has no army and her fleet would not dare to approach nearer our shoes than does the English. The expulsion of Germans from America would mean her ruin, and America's threats are simply ridiculous and it is more than ridiculous for us to take them in earnest.

This sneer is the more stinging because it is true. Our Secretary of War says that we could only put a mobile army of 25,000 men in the field. That is 1000 less men than Germany captured in one victory over the Russians in East Prussia.

We nourish the delusion that our Navy is prepared to give a good account of itself, but Admiral Bradley A. Fiske, who surely knows what he is talking about, said to the House Naval Committee:

> It would take about five years to get ready with our Navy to fight successfully and effectively against an effective navy. . . . I doubt if in five years we could get the Navy up to a state of efficiency, for instance such as that of one of the navies of Europe now. I doubt it very much.

While the world is aflame with war, while the hostilities touch our interests at many points, and when the greatest nations show that their respect for other nations is proportional to the armed might of those other nations, Congress dribbles away money on non-essentials and fritters away time on trifles. Take one issue of the Congressional Record as an example. The House considered the sale of an old Postoffice at Jersey City, a bridge across the St. Louis River, false advertising in the District of Columbia, claims of the United States against the State of Tennessee, public buildings at Grand Junction, Colo., St. Petersburg, Fla., and Honolulu, Lassen National Park, transfer of Alcatraz Island to the Department of Labor, regulation of traffic during parades in the District of Columbia, improvement of the foreign service, use of National forests for recreation, creation of Rocky Mountain National Park and stockraising homesteads.

As Nero fiddled while Rome burned, Congress trifles while the world is aflame and exposes the United States to such well-deserved jibes as that of the German paper quoted.

DEAR BEEF.

Concerning the price of beef the slow moving wits of the Federal Department of Agriculture have finally reached the conclusion that The Oregonian announced a long time ago. In a new bulletin soon to appear the Department experts will say that cheap beef will never be seen again in the United States and the familiar old explanations of high prices will be abandoned for something nearer the truth. The high cost of beef is not so much the work of the beef trust as of economic conditions which are inevitable as population grows denser. A crowded population means dear land with intensive agriculture. Farming in the United States is not yet very intensive compared with that of Holland or China but still it is not nearly so superficial and wasteful as it was twenty-five years ago. The more faithfully the land is tilled the less room there is found upon it for cattle. The space that suffices to raise nourishment for a steer will equally well provide food for a human being and the lower animal will be crowded out of existence.

Of course it may be said that the steer himself can be eaten after he has devoured land products for four or five years but that is no answer. The food that the steer affords after he has been slaughtered has been manufactured at a ruinously heavy cost. He eats as much each year as a man does and when he is finally slaughtered his flesh is not particularly nutritious. It is tasty, we admit, but graham bread contains more nutriment pound for pound. So do white beans. Even the humble and odorous cabbage compares fairly well with prime steaks as far as nutriment is concerned. Evidently therefore beef can only be produced as a luxury in the future and it will be eaten mainly by those who care more for their palates than they do for the family budget. Fortunately the world abounds with foods which are better for us than beef and which, artfully cooked, taste tolerably well.

WHERE THE NAVY'S MONEY GOES.

When more money is asked for the purpose of increasing the effective strength of the Navy, the cry is always raised that money spent on armament is wasted. Congress, however, does not grudge money spent nominally for the Navy, even though it contributes nothing to the effectiveness of that arm of defense and is therefore absolutely wasted.

Ex-Secretary Meyer explains how these things are done, in writing for the North American Review. No appropriation could formerly pass the Senate without the consent of both a Northern and a Southern Senator, the Southerner, Mr. Tillman, being still at the helm. They were primarily responsible for a large share of the waste, but a deceased Louisiana Representative and Senator Perkins did their share of the spending. The result is a collection of useless Navy Yards, the cost of which would have gone far, if spent on battleships, to maintain the rank as a naval power which we have lost.

The Frenchman's Bay coaling station in Maine, now dismantled and practically unused, cost $624,650. On the Portsmouth Navy Yard in New Hampshire there has been expended $10,857,603 in fifteen years, though it was discovered after a dock had been built at a cost of $1,122,800, that $745,300 more must be spent on blasting out a channel. As Boston Navy Yard was only seventy miles distant, this expenditure was unnecessary.

Under "reciprocity treaty" with the New England Senator, Mr. Tillman procured the expenditure of $2,275,000 on the naval station at Port Royal, which has been abandoned, and a naval station has been built at Charleston at a cost of over $5,000,000. A dry dock, built at that city at a cost of $1,250,000, was intended for battleships, but is fit only for gunboats and destroyers.

A Navy Yard was established at New Orleans, 100 miles up the Mississippi River, and "with a floating dock of no service to dreadnoughts," through the influence of a Louisiana member of the House naval committee, who is now dead. That cost over $2,000,000. The Pensacola Yard had cost $12,200,000 up to 1910, but there is little shipbuilding or repair work to show for it. Senator Perkins, being on the naval committee, has continued the good work at Mare Island, which has cost $35,000,000 since 1850, but which has not produced water deep enough for a capital ship. All these items make the respectable total of $68,702,533, enough money to have built five dreadnoughts. We cannot afford to build ships which our Naval officers pronounce necessary to our defense, but we can afford to fling away millions on useless Navy Yards and dry docks.

Mr. Meyer, as Secretary of the Navy, practically closed seven Naval stations, including those at Port Royal, Pensacola and New Orleans, but his successor, Mr. Daniels, has reopened the Pensacola and New Orleans stations, no doubt out of tender regard for the feelings of Florida and Louisiana Congressmen, whose constituents need money.

Woman is a creature of complex traits. She puts her money in her hose and pins her jewels to her nether garment and they are off her mind until she misses them and the minions of municipality are called to the rescue. With man it is different. If he tied his wealth to his pajamas and lost it he would consider the joke so ghastly he would fear to let people know he was careless.

Mr. Herrick, the author, is grateful for the war, since "it gives us something to talk about." Something to wrangle over, he should have said. Most people's opinions about the war are so warmly held that they are ready to quarrel for them. Conversation is hardly agreeable on such a theme. Like politics and religion it is dropped by discreet interlocutors.

A contemporary has made the surprising discovery that "good times always follow bad." We shall be told next that good times always precede bad and that a valley lies between two hills. The sudden announcement of these great truths tends to unsettle weak minds. It were better to disclose them gradually after a course of mental preparation.

One reason why judges dispose of so few cases promptly is their fear of being "reversed on appeal." Since reversals are, like lottery drawings, a pure matter of chance they should not be such a terrible bugbear. Judges ought to learn to face incalculable contingencies with more fortitude than they usually show.

The Woman's Home Campanion for March tells how a woman "can continue to please her husband." She must be neat, cheerful, attentive and so on. We doubt the April number will tell how husbands can continue to please their wives. The secret would be valuable if it were disclosed, for few seem to know it.

Potatoes are a fruit, according to a decision of the Supreme Court at Olympia. We should now be pleased to hear a Supreme Court decision as to whether potatoes grow in trees.

The Germans are about to launch a new advance in Alsace-Lorraine, says an official bulletin. Really, the official press bureaus weary us with their constant repetitions.

With our powder concern in this country spending millions to enlarge its plant, the prospect of peace is dim. The men who make and sell powder know their business.

The Divine Sarah, it develops, has been laid up some time with an injured limb. We thought something must be wrong, having missed her annual farewell tour.

Of the estimated cost of the war for the year, $10,000,000,000, Great Britain spends the most, while her allies suffer most in loss of men.

China is standing firm against Japanese demands. Much the same as if the toad should show a stiff front to the garter snake.

The observer of events in Mexico must now be fully alive to the cowardly weakness of our past course in that distressed country.

It's a long way to Canada from Germany, but the chief ports are being mined as if a raid could be a common occurrence.

Father Tiber and the spring branches of the kingdom are taking the Italian mind off war-like affairs.

The Administration's "one great success" in Mexico is now bearing strangely ominous fruit.

Two weeks since the ground-hog made his debut and he reckons he knows what he is doing.

Albanians are marching into Serbia. Whence they will turn around and march right out again.

The Balkans having gotten a few square meals ahead are now spoiling for another fight.

About Saturday somebody will move to adjourn sine die and attach the emergency clause.

Very much more of our dallying with Mexico will not be permitted by a patient world.

Germany is giving Italy two weeks in which to decide whether to fish or cut bait.

The Kaiser will seize all oats in his country. Wait till he gets to feeling 'em.

Von Hindenburg's latest is to capture 40,000 Moujiks. Woof! Woof!

Slowly but surely our foreign policy is drawing us towards the abyss.

Greece has harkened and her Minister has left Constantinople.

Canada is in fit shape to be scared by even the Aurora Borealis.

This week the fur is certain to fly in Salem.

Remember the Maine, Mr. Wilson.

Half a Century Ago

From The Oregonian February 16, 1865.

The Union Central Committee of Washington Territory has called a convention to be held at Claquato, April 4, 1865, to nominate a candidate of the Union party for Delegate to Congress.

Citizens of Portland have renewed their application making this city the port of entry for the Columbia River country, instead of Astoria. The Treasury Department will report against the project, as the banks of the Columbia between Astoria and the mouth of the Willamette would afford extraordinary facilities for smuggling operations.

San Francisco—Rev. Thomas Pearne, of Oregon, editor of the Christian Advocate, and head of the Methodist Church, in that state, as well as a leading pioneer in the Unconditional Union party of the state, has been here for several days on business.

Mr. Wallace, of Idaho, it is said, is making a strong effort to procure the removal of Elwood Evans, Secretary of Washington Territory, and it is thought by some he will succeed.

There is to be a new district schoolhouse erected in the Third Ward this coming season. It will occupy the north half of block 160, recently deeded by General Coffin for a schoolhouse site.

Among the passengers who left with the steamer yesterday was the Rev. Dr. J. Eckman, a gentleman, who, by his scholarly excellence and liberal disposition has during his residence here not only endeared himself to all who knew him, but by his departure severs himself from his congregation, who will regret his going.

Special orders were received from headquarters yesterday summoning Surgeon W. H. Watkins, of this city, to attend a meeting of the Medical Board at Fort Vancouver today, for an examination of Surgeon Edward Storror, who is a candidate for appointment as surgeon of the First Oregon Cavalry.

Matthew Hall was accidentally shot while hunting ducks at some unpronounceable place on Puget Sound. The contents of the gun entered his head, causing almost instant death.

Victor Smith has faithfully discharged his duties as Collector of Port Townsend, W. T., and having given a full accounting, has been indorsed by the Government. It is said he will receive some substantial proof of executive confidence.

ROBERT EMMET PATRIOT WRITES.

Representative of the "Volunteers" Answers Other Irish Faction.

PORTLAND, Feb. 13.—(To the Editor.)—I presume the columns of The Oregonian are open to both sides of a question. Regarding the meeting of the Consolidated German Societies and the Robert Emmet Society on March 7, two individuals, one Shanahan and someone under the non de plume of "I. T. D.," have arrogated to themselves the right in two recent letters in The Oregonian to speak for the Irish people. Who issued the authority to them is not clear; perhaps the writers merely took this bombastic way to express their own views. Undoubtedly Ireland has her Tories, as America had, for it will be recalled that there was no exodus of Tories to Canada at the time of the Revolution. The Irish Tories of the present, represented by the above letter-writers and by John E. Redmond, believe that Ireland is and should be a subject nation, the tail of England's kite; and their national aspirations are satisfied by a home rule bill unworthy the name, and which may never go into effect, and in any event will exclude Ulster. Such a mess of pottage is not sufficient consideration for the sacrifice of the aspirations of a nation. Ireland is not satisfied to be a subject nation. She has the same right to be free that England or America has. In America we believe that all government is based on the consent of the governed. And if this principle is right, it applies in Ireland as well as here. England's right in Ireland is based on force. Ireland has the right to meet this force with force, and to accept the aid of the great German nation to overcome this force, as America accepted the aid of France at the time of the battle of Yorktown. It did not reflect any credit on the colored man to be a loyal slave at the time of the Civil War. It does not reflect any credit on these so-called "Irish" Tories to be preaching loyalty to the hand that smote the Irish people for upwards of one thousand years.

George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin were American rebels. Out of their rebellion sprung our great and glorious Nation. The Irish Volunteers seek neither advice nor aid from Irish Tories or toadies. The Robert Emmet Society prefers and will follow such men as Robert Casement, who is now in Berlin, and who is the successor of Wolfe, Tone and Robert Emmet.

252 Broadway. EDWARD RYAN.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT LAW NEEDS.

Reader Proposes to Let Laborers Feel More of Responsibility.

PORTLAND, Feb. 13.—(To the Editor.)—After being asked to express my opinion on the state industrial accident law by several parties, and invited to go to Salem to influence our legislators, I received a circular statement from the Commission of the business transacted up to January 31, 1915. Knowing your paper to be the best medium through which to discuss public questions, I ask you to publish the following:

Whatever laws our legislators may enact, they should not treat the wage-worker as an inferior one who must be taken care of; one who is working for some one else. But he should be made to feel his responsibility by levying at least 50 per cent, if not 75 per cent of the assessment on him. He would take more interest in the honest and just disbursement of the fund and would be inclined to be more watchful of his fellow employes. He would feel more like a responsible person, not like a mere number.

One other thing that should be in the law is the amount of money that the Commission is allowed for administrative expenses, a certain per cent of the gross revenue.

The present Commissioners' report is, that they spent $48,560.21 to collect $375,508.12, and to spend $219,305.75. Which, considering the conditions of collections, seems excessive. Men with insurance business experience will be able to give the legislators data on this. WILLIAM ISENSEE.

414 Broadway.

"Dollar" Comes From Dutch.

Indianapolies News.

The abreviation "Ps," to signify pesos, was the origin of the American dollar mark, according to a Spanish-American scientist. When America was first settled, the Dutch and the Spanish were strong competitors for the trade of the world. The word dollar is but a corruption of the Dutch "thaler" or "thaller," a coin much used in commerce at that period, and which superseded the "pieces-of-eight" of Spanish coinage. The peso or plaster, which was the Spanish name for "pieces-of-eight," was worth approximately the same as the thaler, and as the Dutch name was easier to say, it found a place in our language in the corrupted form, while the abbreviation for the peso remained as the sole reminder of the Spanish mintage in our financial records.

PARTY DELEGATE BILL DEFENDED

Rights of Voter in Interest of Clean Politics Made Issue.

PORTLAND, Feb. 15.—(To the Editor.)—A bill is now pending in the Legislative Assembly at Salem providing that hereafter the voters of Oregon, who are entitled to 10 delegates in the National conventions of their respective parties, shall be entitled to express their preference for the entire group of 10, instead of being entitled to vote for but one. It is reported that Mr. U'Ren, the sage and lawgiver of Oregon City, has issued his orders that this legislation must be defeated. At the risk of being denounced as a standpatter, a reactionary, a gargoyle and everything else that is dastardly and disreputable, the writer ventures to inquire what substantial reason can be given for protest against this bill. How does it in any way "violate the spirit" of the direct primary? In what way does it "imperil the liberties" of the people? Every voter in the State of Oregon at the last election was allowed to vote for four candidates for Supreme Judge. Every voter in Multnomah County had the privilege of voting for a dozen candidates for the lower house. The people, by a heavy vote, turned down Mr. U'Ren's scheme for proportional representation. Yet that measure, proposing as it did to give better representation to minority parties, had merit, which that law has not, which, as to nine-tenths of the delegates to our National conventions, disfranchises every voter in the state. In this matter the existing law has no effect except to nullify majority rule, and to promote party discord. Ten candidates, none of them polling more than a bare surplus over 10 per cent of the party vote, in a field of 11 candidates, might secure credentials as delegates. If the field of candidates were large enough it would be possible to send an entire delegation not one of whom received 5 per cent of the party vote. A single candidate might poll 75 per cent of the vote, leaving the other nine delegates to scramble for the remaining 25 per cent. Let every state adopt this method and every delegation would be a hotbed of warring factions. The majority will in no state would find fair expression. Party discord is not in the interest of decent politics. It is a thing that petty politicians fatten upon. It forces compromises that always bring mediocre men to the front. No method that offers a premium upon the defeat of the will of the majority is in the public interest. If there are 10 delegates to be elected to the National Republican Convention, every Republican in the state is entitled to vote for 10. If there are 10 delegates to be elected to the National Democratic Convention, every Democrat in the state is entitled to vote for 10. If there are 10 delegates to be elected to the National Progressive Convention, every Progressive in the state is entitled to vote for 10, and in no case can the party will get fair expression except by naming as delegates the 10 candidates polling the highest vote, with every voter having had the privilege of expressing his opinion upon every one of them.

It is no longer lese majeste to suggest an occasional amendment to the direct primary law, although we still have among us time-serving politicians who always turn pale and take to the brush every time they see Brother U'Ren. The press has reported Senator Wood as having given out the broad intimation that "some of our legislators haven't lime enough in their backbones to whitewash their bald heads." The action of the Legislature upon this proposition to re-enfranchise the voters of Oregon in the matter of electing delegates to our National conventions will have some bearing upon the question as to whether or not Dr. Wood's diagnosis is correct.

CHARLES B. MOORES.

MARRIED TEACHER IS ADVISED

Experienced Mother Comments on Situation Now Before School Board.

PORTLAND, Feb. 15.—(To the Editor.)—One cannot see how a teacher after signing a contract not to marry while she teaches gains anything by suing at losing her position. She probably would not have thought of such a thing had the man she married been other than a lawyer. The majority of wage-earners is undoubtedly, at present, on the side of the School Board for, dropping the educational phase of the case, why should a community dole out two jobs to a young couple when there are not half enough for men of families. Every employer should be careful, in times of economic stress, not to waste positions, in other words, not to give them to daughters of well-to-do parents, or to wives of men who have positions. Were the employers to practice this economy we would then seldom hear such distressing tales of family men as we have lately. Weren't we all sorry to see such small gain in our last census. It should pay every employer to put a premium on the man with a family; that is, give him employment in preference to the young couples, who, by both working, are able to live in $45 to $50 apartments and who fill our show houses night after night.

My advice to Mrs. R. is, if your husband is not yet established, but a struggling lawyer, start your homenest on as modest a basis as your mother, no doubt, did.

EXPERIENCED MOTHER.

Caustic Compliments Paid Bill.

PORTLAND, Feb. 13.—(To the Editor.)—Congratulations on your stand on the ship subsidy or shipping bill. Evidently we have not yet had enough crank or half-cracked measures foisted on a suffering public by the present nondescript administration or apology for same, which is always looking back or lauding up old Tom (Jefferson) for his anti-government monopoly or state's rights ideas, now in order to stave off what it scents to be sure defeat resorts to a measure of the rankest kind of Socialism and one which many after all believe to be unnecessary. Anything to win or "beat Grant" seems to be the motto. But it will fail, as it has in the past. It has the elements of its own dissolution if only given free reign to hang itself. Let them go to it, we say, and the sooner the better. E. W. B.

IF?

(Not by Kipling.)

If we planned and, planning, labored
To help others on their way;
If we sang and, singing, lessened
Frets and worries of the day;
If we did and, doing, lifted
Just a shadow from a friend;
Would we not, and others also
Happier be when day should end?

If we knew and, knowing, followed
Rules of kindness, paths of love;
If we hoped and, hoping, trusted
In the words of him above;
If we thought and, thinking, quoted
Only good of those we know;
Would we not, and others also,
Have a heaven here below?

HORACE WILLIAM MACNEAL.

Minister and His Practice.

Judge.

Little Elsie—"My papa's a minister, and that is best." Little Grace—"My papa's a lawyer, and that's best too." Little Elsie—"No, your papa is not a really lawyer; he just practices law. But my papa is a really minister, because he just preaches and never practices. My mamma says so."

Newspapers in Australia.

PORTLAND, Feb. 15.—(To the Editor.)—Will you kindly publish the name of a newspaper at Sydney or at Melbourne, Australia. SUBSCRIBER.

The Bulletin at Sydney; the Argus at Melbourne.

Twenty-five Years Ago

From The Oregonian February 16, 1890.

Spokane Falls—The Spokane Mill Company's extensive sawmill property and a part of their waterpower has virtually been sold to the Bank of England. The mills and a portion of the waterpower are to go at $600,000, according to the option which runs to March 1, or all the waterpower and property at $1,250,000.

Salem—Mrs. C. P. Stratton, 87, died here last night. She was the mother of Julius Stratton, of Seattle, and crossed the plains in 1852.

In an interview General Nelson A. Miles says: "A proposition has been made to expend $125,000,000 for defense of the Pacific and Atlantic Coasts. This sum of money could be disposed of advantageously in the course of four or five years, but if the usual course with appropriations is pursued nearly a generation will have passed before any practical results are accomplished. This is an important subject, and Congress cannot do a wiser thing than to authorize a speedy outlay for protection of the large cities of the United States, now almost defenseless."

Congressman Anderson, of Kansas, has introduced a bill in Congress appropriating $250,000 for the purchase of a residence in or near Washington for the President.

The Merchants' Exchange Association is now occupying new quarters in the Pacific Postal building, on First, between Pine and Ash streets. William J. Leahy, manager, says the moving task is practically ended. Jeff Hayes, manager of the Postal, announces the telegraph offices will be elegantly finished and equipped.

On Saturday, March 1, No. 1 of the new weekly paper, the Real Estate Review, will be issued by the well-known real estate firm of Hughes, Brown & Co. Leo Peterson will have charge of the paper as manager.

At 10 o'clock yesterday morning Rev. Dr. Abrahams began the ceremonies of confirming in the Jewish faith the twin son and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sam Wolf, at the Congregation Ahavi Sholom, Sixth and Ash streets. The candidates are just 13 years of age.

Mr. Richard Williams and daughters have gone to California for a brief visit.

T. A. McBride, Prosecuting Attorney of Clatsop County, came down from Oregon City yesterday.

City Attorney Adams, who left this city several days ago for Worcester, Mass., will be absent several weeks, looking after the interests of the heirs of William Gates, deceased brother of the late ex-Mayor John Gates.

T. M. Hurlburt, County Surveyor, has been ill for the past week at his residence in East Portland. He is still confined to his bed.

Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Malarkey have left for Hot Springs, Ark., on a two months' vacation.

N. J. Levinson came over from Port Townsend during the week to attend the opera at the New Marquam.

Miss Gretchen Beck gave an informal whist party Tuesday evening in honor of Miss Etta Tracy.

Miss Sallie Stetson and Chauncey B. Winslow will be married at the residence of the bride's father in San Francisco, tomorrow night.

SCHOOL SYSTEM NOT FOR SPOILS

Voters Will Uphold Mr. Alderman and Rebuke Politicians, Is View.

PORTLAND, Feb. 15.—(To the Editor).—In these days when the people are looking more sharply than ever after their individual property interests, it is to be hoped that they will not lose sight of certain things which relate to the public welfare. Now the fact is that Portland's best investment is her public school system, and the services of the present City Superintendent, L. R. Alderman, are second in value only to the system itself. It is extremely doubtful if there is another man of like ability anywhere in the west. Mr. Alderman already has a national reputation, as an educator, and such men are always in demand in the larger fields of education. Portland will be fortunate in retaining Mr. Alderman, and he will be retained because the people recognize his value as the head of the school system here. This is one position the people will not tolerate to be used on the political chessboard, or as a reward for personal favors, or as an asset in the spoils system.

Mr. Alderman is now City Superintendent because he is the best man that could be had for the place. He has won this distinction purely on merit, and I very much mistake the temper of the people if they permit his displacement. It is gratifying to note that when there was a suggestion that he might possibly be displaced the prompt protest of the people put a quietus on any movement along that line. CITIZEN.

The New Incinerator.

PORTLAND, Feb. 14.—(To the Editor.)—I note in The Oregonian that the residents of Marquam Gulch complained of the stench caused by Commissioner Daly's experimenting. How about all the refuse dumped in every vacant lot in Woodstock, Brooklyn and Richmond districts? It is impossible for the residents of the above districts to dispose of their garbage, as there are no garbage collectors to be had. It is about time that The Oregonian should see to it that Daly gets the new incinerator into operation. It would be a good thing for the city and the health of those who live in the vicinity of all these dump heaps. The bonds have been voted on more than 20 months ago, and it is high time that something is being done. TAXPAYER.

Using Telegraph Pole.

PORTLAND, Feb. 12.—(To the Editor.)—I am planning to erect an aerial for wireless telegraphy. Am I permitted to fasten a guy rope to a telegraph pole? A SCHOOLBOY.

Get permission in writing from the telegraph or telephone company which owns the pole and be sure you do not violate any city ordinance.