

The Oregonian

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Portland, Wednesday, May 9, 1917.

THE FETTER OF FORM.

Such dissatisfaction as exists in Portland with commission form of government doubtless arises from that system's failure to live up to the extravagant promises of its promoters.

Now two new charters are offered and adoption of either would wipe out the commission and bring about return to a more or less modified form of Councilmanic government.

It is not the purpose herein to discuss the merits or demerits of the two charters which have been offered.

The Oregonian has never been a believer in the all-powerful influence of mere system. Therefore its disappointment over results during the last four years is but moderate.

Today the situation seems to be reverting to government by men in public estimation and economy is the watchword.

It is said that Portland needs a Council composed of a Mayor and Commissioners instead of one composed wholly of Mayors or one composed wholly of Commissioners.

Through a making himself a real leader, through a directing head, five little, quarrelling principalities in the form of city departments.

The real road to better government stands out a broad white way, plainly marked with the guide posts of experience.

disclosed are not primarily the faults of the chosen. They have come from the weaknesses and the idiosyncrasies of the men elected to office.

The Oregonian urges its readers in Portland to cast aside the fetich of the past and elect intelligence in the selection of officials.

The Republican minority in the Senate complains that its leaders are not consulted by President Wilson, and the Democrats are obliged to acknowledge the great questions of emergency legislation are equally in the dark until the President tells them what he wants.

Something is to be said for the President in his policy of solving all great problems for himself, and committing the results in solitude to his trusty typewriter.

Central control of railroads for war purposes will give the American people a demonstration of possible economic and improvements in transportation.

These plans will give a practical demonstration of the construction of rail and water transportation which has been much discussed and which is recommended by the late James J. Hill.

When the railroads have proved this and have also become convinced of their inability to carry all the traffic without investment of impossible sums of money, they may be willing to accept water lines as teammates instead of fighting them as rivals.

The genius of the United States Shipping Board for an appropriation of \$1,000,000,000 or 6,000,000 tons of building 5,000,000 or 6,000,000 tons of ships implies that the board has a plan for building a tonnage of 10,000,000 tons.

When young women become conductors, the sight of one hanging out a rear window, juggling a trolley rope, will be hilarious.

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allies need is ships, then more ships, and then still more ships. The allies and the world's commerce can use all the ships that can be built at all the yards, existing and projected, on all the coasts of the United States as long as the war lasts, and for some time afterward.

When such is the first requisite of winning the war, it is arrant folly to waste time in discussing the relative merits of steel and wood, of Pacific Coast lumber and Southern lumber.

Now we read every day, and it does not even thrill us any more, about great flocks of planes in the air along the battle front, or a Lieutenant who has just "brought down" his thirtieth "enemy machine," or of the bombardment of a munitions factory across some border, or a raid on England by monster Zeppelins.

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How to Keep Well.

Questions pertinent to hygiene, sanitation and prevention of disease, of general interest, will be answered in this column. When the space will permit the subject is not suitable letters will be published.

Benefits of a Baby Week.

A YEAR ago the New York milk companies published a list of cities with low baby death rates. La Crosse, Wis., led the list. In the Baby Week campaign bulletin of the extension division of the University of Wisconsin the claim is made that Marinette, Neenah, Baraboo, Sturgeon Bay, South Milwaukee, Beaver Dam, Madison, Kenosha, Appleton, Racine and Antigo have baby death rates that are as low, or practically as low, as that of La Crosse.

The state of Wisconsin has reason to be proud of the way it takes care of its babies. Of course, there are many people of Scandinavian stock in that state, and the babies of that stock seem to have an unusually good hold on life.

The people of other states could learn from a study of what is done in Baby Week there. In the first place, they like the baby show idea. They know that it reaches people in a way that gets across.

Spain is going ahead with the establishment of new industries, notwithstanding the fact that it is suffering in a business way because of the war, and Great Britain is not letting public improvements in the Bermudas lag behind.

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Making Men.

There is a deep and biological reason why brass buttons so strongly appeal to the imaginations of women; a military training stands in their minds as indication of the physical strength and executive force which they must depend upon for the protection and rearing of the race which they must produce.

The Albin people are thoroughly aroused on the Great Bridge question. It is a subject that is talked about in business houses and on the streets. When the first word spoken is about the free bridge.

London.—The Prussian press complains that France is continuing military preparations. Italy and Belgium, in addition, the Government has announced, will be represented at the peace conference.

Chicago.—Little change is reported in the eight-hour revolution. Many men are resuming work, but the strikers still hold their ground and assert their determination to hold out to the last.

New York.—The Tribune says there is conclusive evidence that no offer to release Jeff Davis has been made.

New York.—Sir Roderick Murchison has lessened from a number of years later than the alleged murder of Livingston, but saying nothing of the massacre, Murchison insists that an expedition be sent to solve the mystery.

Two attempts were made yesterday morning to fire buildings in this city, both of which were fortunately frustrated. These incidents indicate the presence of scoundrels for whom our police and private watchmen should keep a vigilant look out.

For years your brilliant hints have caught our attention. Of Freedom's sun, upon your staff there perched The white-winged dove of peace, pure as the snow, undimmed by scorching battle fires.

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In Other Days.

Washington.—The American fleet assigned to the duty of patrolling Behring Sea, now at Port Townsend, will start north in a few days.

On Thursday morning next The Oregonian will publish a large amount of special matter relating to the centennial at Astoria.

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HIS WAY.

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PROFECT.

Only a few years ago, as time runs these days, Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote these lines on the feelings of a man who had just experienced the sensation of riding in a rowing shell:

Here you are, then, afloat with a body as you choose to call them, stretching more than twenty feet from tip to tip, every foot of yours extending as perfectly into them as if your spinal cord ran down the center of your body.

Now we read every day, and it does not even thrill us any more, about great flocks of planes in the air along the battle front, or a Lieutenant who has just "brought down" his thirtieth "enemy machine," or of the bombardment of a munitions factory across some border, or a raid on England by monster Zeppelins.

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WATER LINES TO BE TRIED.

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FOR REFERENDUM ON FESTIVAL.

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THE FLAG OF LIBERTY.

Born amid storm of war, flag of the free, And clattered with the blood of patriotic sires, You've waved triumphantly o'er land and sea.

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