The Oregonian

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PORTLAND, TUESDAY, JAN. 8, 1918.

WANTED—A 5-CENT NICKEL.

There is a letter in The Oregonian today in which the writer expresses doubt as to the authority of the Public Service Commission to override the franchise provision for a 5-cent streetcar fare in the city of Portland. If such a thing is in the law, then, he says, the Legislature should be condemned.

It is not necessary to quote the law. It is as plain on that particular issue as words can make it. Its provisions extend to every incorporated city. That much is generally known—if it be assumed that the people read and understand laws before they adopt them.

The public utilities law was submitted to the people of the state by referendum. It was approved by a majority of more than 25,000. In Portland, where there was the widest room for application of its plainly possible overthrow of franchise agreements, it carried by a vote of nearly two to one.

When this law was adopted the people indorsed the principle that if it is fair to a utility to regulate its rates downward when such rates are unreasonable, it is justice to a utility to regulate them upward when they are insufficient. The law gives the Commission power to do either as the circumstances warrant. And there is a further settled principle, outside of this law, which prevents enforcement by the order of any regulatory body of rates that are confiscatory. The 5-cent fare, the Commission finds, is confiscatory.

The 6-cent fare order of the Commission is not agreeable to car patrons. It is not human nature to accept increased cost of anything without grumbling. But what is to be done about it? One learns from the findings of the Commission that if present rates are continued and there is no drastic curtailment of service or reduction of wage scale the company will be forced into the hands of a receiver. If that should come to pass, the receiver would be confronted by the same problems that confront the company. He would have only the earnings to rely upon. He would have to make drastic reductions in service or wage scale, or increase rates.

Is that a satisfactory solution of the problem? It is not a solution at all. Is there any other? Mr. Stahl, today, suggests tender of a 5-cent fare, followed by legal action for forfeiture of the franchise, and, after that, city control or operation with deficits made up by the general taxpayers. But the Supreme Court has already upheld the legality of an order of the Commission which was contrary to express franchise agreements. The suit would obviously fail.

If purchase by the city is contemplated, there is the vote of the people to await and the sale of bonds to contemplate, if the people shall have approved, and the possible opposition of the company to face. That plan offers nothing at all for the immediate present and only something indefinite for the future.

There is also the vague and rambling suggestion of a newspaper contemporary that the business property of the city instead of car patrons ought to relieve the company's plight. How that might be done is left pleasantly to the imagination, but the argument runs, as usual, to the conclusion that the 6-cent fare is not right.

One and all of us would like to learn of some definite, practical plan for making five cents do the work of six without imposing injustice upon anybody. So let us fix the discussion on a firm basis and avoid reiteration. Let us admit that no car patron wants the 6-cent fare. Let us admit that the automobile owners, who helped put the company in its pickle by withdrawing their patronage, ought to do something about it, although we do not know what. Let us concede that even though everything else under the sun from letter postage to wooden ships has come up in price, streetcar fares should forever remain unchanged. Having resolved on these satisfactory premises, let the wise men who are doing nothing but harp on the injustice of the 6-cent fare propose an actually intelligent alternative.

The crying need of the day is a 5-cent nickel. We shall crown the inventor with laurels.

WHAT WOMEN CAN DO.

"The Lord blesses the harvest when the women do the work," is a Bulgarian proverb that seems again to have been justified by events, according to our Consul at Sofia, who says in a recent report to the United States Department of Commerce that, notwithstanding the war and the mobilization of practically all the able-bodied men of the country, the 1917 crops have been unusually abundant. Bulgaria is allied with our enemies, although we are technically at peace with her, but this need not blind us to the spirit of self-denial which moves the wives and sisters of the men at the front.

It will also intensify our own sense of responsibility to know that for two years Bulgaria has had exceptionally good harvests. We cannot count too strongly on the starvation of our foes while this condition exists, but can only resolve to outdo them if possible. All accounts now agree that both in quantity and quality wheat, rye, oats, barley and millet far surpass the country's normal yield. The cotton crop has been only a little below the average. Fruits and nuts are more abundant than ever before known. Five bumper crops of alfalfa were gathered in the course of the year, women doing the work with the help of only a few farm animals. Almost all the horses and oxen of Bulgaria have been commandeered for war work. A supreme test of the confidence of the people in the sufficiency of the harvest is found in an order increasing the bread ration of both army and people.

This manifestation of the capacity of women in an emergency is the more striking in the case of Bulgaria because it is seen in the manual work of agriculture. Bulgaria is a land of peasants, and the soil is its chief resource. In other countries women are no less active and no less competent, although special efforts have been made so to distribute labor as to employ them to the best possible advantage. But the experience of all countries has shown that in whatever they undertake, women are making good. We shall find a better way in America than mobilizing our women for the heavy tasks of plowtime and harvest, but it is some comfort to feel that in time of supreme necessity they would not fail us even there.

MAKE HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES.

Certain sections of the United States, notably the South, where the sun shines much of the time and bounteous nature discounts thrift, are experiencing a shortage of labor at the same time that thousands of men are working one-half and one-third time. This is particularly true where Southern negroes are depended upon for a large share of the work. They figure that because their wages have been trebled they need only one-third as many days of employment to keep the pot boiling. Their sense of future benefits and responsibilities is not deeply ingrained. Employment in these industries has not been helped by offering high wages, and workmen have been gainers only by the multiplication of leisure hours. These are not always well employed.

The same is true in less degree in some of the industrial centers of the East, where the Bolshevik notion prevails that a few hours' work ought to be enough to produce the bare necessaries of life and where ambition is not highly developed. The practice is least common in the West, which is noted for the unbounded energy of its people. Payment of bonuses as an inducement to continuous work also has furnished incentive for crowding earnings to the full.

It ought not to require conscription of labor to induce men to take advantage of relatively better wages than have prevailed in recent years. There is the consideration of patriotism, as well as of thrift. Industries upon which the war depends should not lack men while there are any who are working only half the time. Those who see in better wages only the opportunity for more idleness deserve special consideration.

It is, moreover, a good time to make hay while the sun shines. All hope for "boom times" after the war is over, but no one can be found to underwrite them. It is a commonsense plan to be prepared for any eventuality. There will not be much sympathy for the panhandler in some dull Winter of the future who neglected in the good days of 1918 to lay by something for the rainy day. This class will be first to call upon the industrious and the forehanded to divide with them. It would be far better for them to work more days a week now and invest their surplus in war stamps or liberty bonds.

REDEEMING THE NAME OF BYNG.

When General Byng made his recent sensational advance across the shell-torn fields of northern France, he not only added to the glory of the British arms, but redeemed the name of Byng in British annals. The story of the failure of another Byng, an admiral, to exert his utmost efforts in the face of the enemy in the Seven Years' War, which is referred to by the historian Greene as having completed the "shame of England," is interesting because it is part of the history of the development of democracy in the British Navy to the point where officers of all ranks are subject to the same penalties for failure to do their duty.

Port Mahon, then the "key to the Mediterranean," was besieged by the Duke of Richelieu and Admiral Byng was ordered to land marines to reinforce the garrison, a command with which he found much fault, because his fleet was already undermanned and he believed that the garrison could not hold out against the French, even with the assistance proposed. He also feared that if he should meet the French fleet after his own personnel had been depleted, he would be placed at a serious disadvantage. Correspondence records show that he left his station in the channel prepared for failure. Before he could land any of his fighting men, however, the French ships appeared. A battle was fought on May 9, 1756. The French cut up the leading ships of Byng's command and slipped away.

Then followed a discussion on board the British fleet of the strategical issues presented. A flag captain pointed out to Byng that by a certain maneuver he could force the French center into closer action, but Byng dissented on the ground that Thomas Mathews had previously been condemned for doing the same thing. The French got away undamaged and Byng abandoned the fort to its fate. His failure brought the wrath of a nation upon his head and he was court-martialed and shot. The court acquitted him of personal cowardice, but convicted him of not having done his utmost, regardless of consequences. A fickle public on more mature reflection was inclined to blame the Admiralty for having shifted blame for its own omissions upon the Admiral and there was a reaction, too late, in the Admiral's favor.

The Articles of War under which Admiral Byng was convicted, however, had been deliberately amended because of growing feeling that the higher officers of the navy had savagely punished lower officers, while showing lenity for those of their own rank. The case of a Lieutenant named Phillips, whose Captain had taken his vessel into action unprepared and who surrendered his ship, on the death of his superior, after she could no longer be defended, was fresh in the public mind. The Lieutenant was executed. The ensuing amendment of the Articles of War left no punishment save death for any officer, of any rank, who did less than his utmost against the enemy, either in battle or in pursuit. The fate of Admiral Byng marked an epoch, therefore, in British sea traditions, which was reflected gloriously but tragically in the battle off Coronel, Chile, on November 1, 1914, in which Admiral Cradock engaged an obviously superior force without waiting for a later date when reinforcements already on the way might have insured victory and saved his own ships from destruction.

History had already modified the harsh judgment of the British Admiralty in 1757, and had been content with its own verdict that Admiral Byng committed only an error of judgment when the exploit of General Julian Byng, one of the most striking of a war replete with sensations, came to complete the redemption of the name. It is of incidental moment that still another Byng is recorded in English history as having shattered the hopes of James, son of James II., of gaining the throne after he had obtained armament from the King of France. This Byng, in 1707, half a century before the Minorca failure, captured the French ships of the expedition and the pretender's prospects were forever blighted.

ANDREW JACKSON.

The battle of New Orleans was fought 103 years ago today. It was a victory for the American forces under General Andrew Jackson—the most conspicuous success for our troops in the entire war of 1812—and although the fact that it occurred two weeks after the peace of Ghent had been signed deprived it of military significance, it was momentous because it gave Jackson a pre-eminent position in the politics of the country. Undoubtedly it led to his election as President. This gave recognition to the rapidly-growing new country of the West and to the frontiersmen, whom Jackson better than any other man in public life understood. It definitely marked an era in the development of popular Government.

The characteristics of Andrew Jackson that seem to stand out most clearly after the lapse of time are his extreme pugnacity and his fierce patriotism. It is not hard to make allowance for the first, in view of the second, especially in the times in which he lived. People were more openly quarrelsome then than they are now. Brawls were not uncommon at public gatherings and the duel was an accepted institution. The turbulent life of our seventh President reflected the social conditions of his day. He owed his popularity largely to the extent to which he embodied the spirit of the people then. Neither a trained statesman nor an accomplished man of affairs, he was nevertheless absolutely fearless in a period when physical bravery counted for much, and when, as in every other age, moral courage carried its own appeal. Heedless and obstinate he may have been, but even his political enemies conceded his fearlessness and his honesty.

An index to Jackson's conduct may be found in his own words of advice to a friend: "Take all the time for thinking that circumstances permit, but when the time for action comes, stop thinking." Daniel Webster, who was a political antagonist, used to say that Jackson was apt to decide prematurely that the time for action had come and that this trait led him into most of the errors of his public life. The chronology of his biography is filled with singular contradictions. His opposition to the farewell address of Congress to George Washington in 1796, his denunciation of Thomas Jefferson and his passionate defense of Aaron Burr, his introduction of the spoils system still dear to the Democratic heart, contrast strangely with his famous toast, "Our Federal Union! It Must and Shall Be Preserved!" and his stern repression of nullification sentiment.

Jackson's heart was with the people, but his methods were those of the autocrat and would scarcely be tolerated nowadays. Members of his Cabinet were not his advisers, but rather a kind of military aides. Those whom he could not bend to his will he dismissed incontinentally. It is not surprising that those who could not control him directly should seek to influence him by indirection, and that this should have added the phrase "kitchen cabinet" to our language. Little given to calm thought and often prey to his own extremes of temper, he presented a vulnerable front, for all his rugged probity. It would be hard for us now to imagine ourselves electing a President who had engaged in several duels and had killed his antagonist in one of them, but times have changed.

Jackson was a man of action in a day that called for action, and among people who delighted to worship one who openly avowed the policy of "when the time comes to act, stop thinking!" It was their way of rebuking the academicians. The country probably was benefited upon the whole by the eight years of his incumbency of the Presidency, for it diverted the popular thought into new channels and greatly stimulated patriotism and individual initiative.

IMPROVE TO DEVELOP COMMERCE.

The adverse report on improvement of the Upper Columbia River shows that the United States engineers or the persons who instruct them look at the subject from the wrong point of view. They say that "present commerce" does not justify the improvement. The purpose of river improvement is not, or should not be, to accommodate "present commerce"; it should be to develop commerce where a good opportunity exists. The engineers should ascertain whether there is an opportunity.

If everybody had taken the same attitude as the United States engineers, the West would still have been a wilderness; in fact, the United States would not have been peopled by white men. There was no "present" agriculture when the first settlers landed in Virginia and at Plymouth Rock, and they almost starved. But they have developed agriculture and every other industry to the splendid proportions which they have now attained. The only present industry of any kind in California when the forty-niners came was the cattle ranching of the Spaniards and the diminutive farming of the monks; the forty-niners were the vanguard of the developers. There was little but fur trading in the Oregon country when the pioneers came, but they have developed it into rich commonwealths. There was no traffic in the West when Huntington, Stanford, Villard and Hill built their railroads, except such as was carried on wagons, packtrains, canoes and a few steamers, but they developed traffic by providing the means of carrying it. Mankind has progressed by improving the opportunities which nature provides, for nature provides few things ready to use.

The engineers may base their conclusion on the small use which is made of the improvement already existing in the Columbia River, but that is due to a number of obstacles which the Government has permitted to grow up. Present traffic conditions are now removing them. Traffic so far exceeds the capacity of the railroads that the Government has undertaken their operation in order to get the utmost use of their facilities. When that is done there will still be a large volume of traffic which the railroads cannot carry, and the Shipping Board is providing for it by building craft to carry it on inland waterways. The railroad competition which has caused decline of water transportation is thus removed. Improvements already made are now to be used, and use will extend up the rivers as fast as improvement is extended. Commerce for the Upper Columbia is in sight as soon as deep water, wharves and vessels are provided.

Conditions on the Columbia and Snake rivers are such that dams and locks at the rapids would be a direct, interest-paying investment. Power plants could be built in connection, which would expand manufacture and pump water for irrigation to the bench lands of the valley. The income from power should suffice to pay interest on the entire investment for both power and navigation.

The Pennsylvania State Department of Agriculture has begun a campaign to make bee-keeping more popular, in the hope that this will prove an effective measure for conserving sugar at practically no cost to the people. The point emphasized is that almost every blossom that grows contains sugar in minute quantities which can be extracted commercially only by bees. Waste land everywhere, vacant lots and roadsides, and crops grown primarily for other purposes, contain vast quantities of raw material for the hive-factory, and the bee is the only medium by which it can be converted into human food. Growing crops, especially fruit, are benefited by the process, which fills the air with workers and takes nothing from the fertility of the soil. The department says that the important thing is to create new beekeepers, since those already in the business can be depended upon to see their opportunity, and honey is good not only as a confection but can be used in cooking, as not enough housewives know.

Mr. Heney finds it necessary to deny a story purporting to emanate from him intimating Government will take control of packing-houses. The point is that it is funny to hear Mr. Heney deny anything. He is not a flusher, though alleged to be great on the bluff.

The stork visited a home in the northeastern section of the city yesterday and left a son, who automatically became a Red Cross member by reason of a waiting certificate and button. When that boy has grown he will have pride of country.

Again, as in 1812, Russia relies on her vast size as her best defense. By converting the broad strip of country which they would abandon into a desert, the Russians would make its gain a net loss to the enemy.

The younger doctors of Oregon are not hanging back in fear or hope; they are modest and lack confidence. A young doctor is not sure of himself until he has grown a beard and looks older.

Hunger is the deadliest foe of all the belligerent nations, but it hits hardest at the hitherto corpulent Teuton, and his only comfort is that his diminished waistband requires less cloth.

The Kaiser has conferred an order of merit on the commander who sank the American destroyer. It is not done that way in America. They tell him "Bully boy!" and that's enough for him.

It is little use to say the central powers are in more danger of hunger than the allies. That does not help. The thing to be done is to relieve our side. Any plan that helps is the right way.

It is not disloyal to eat sauerkraut; quite the contrary. It saves other food that we need for the men who are freeing the world from the fellows who invented the stuff.

Canned corned beef is an old matter, and now St. Helens is meeting it with canned cabbage. By and by one can tackle the National dish with a can opener.

There are other objections to living in Chicago besides the fact that it is the sixth German city in the world; blizzards and coal famines, for example.

Disregarding what has been given, Portland will meet the K. C. drive with full hands. Any way of doing good to the soldier is the Portland way.

That German Mayor has taken office at Michigan City. This is the most ethical and etiquettical country on earth, hogtied with red tape.

The man who figures on walking will find leather will cost more than the increased fare. He might do it on roller skates, though.

One kind of war work in which everyone, big and little, can join is keeping an eye out for disloyal acts and reporting them.

The young woman who sues a banker for a quarter-million for alleged breach of promise has a hand-picked victim.

The slogan "Clear the freight cars" means "Fill the warehouses," and the next cry will be for more storage space.

Because of her good roads, California is first to get the benefits of parcel post extension on auto trucks.

Interesting reading would be a list of the leading Bolsheviki who have German mothers.

Did you ever see a fat lettercarrier? All are healthy because they walk at their work.

With all his power, Director-General McAdoo cannot issue a pass to his cook.

"Economize meat by eating mutton" is not as bad an Irish bull as it sounds.

Pure viciousness inspires an aviator to destroy a church or cathedral.

Potatoes three times a day will help win the war.

Man's Happiest Moment.

By Wallace Hull Miller, of the Vigilantes.

The happiest moment in a man's life should be the moment when he puts on a United States uniform and offers himself to his country and to humanity. It is at this moment that he feels the greatest thrill in his life—the thrill of Americanism.

These words need very little amplification. Think a moment on their significance and the consistent historic truth represented by them.

Can you stand on Plymouth Rock or Bunker Hill without your blood coursing faster? Can you read the story of Daniel Boone and the long list of sturdy pioneers who drove back the savage hordes and pushed forward the horizon of civilization; can you recall the stirring career of John Paul Jones and the valiant men of the infant Navy who cleared the seas and made them safe for the Stars and Stripes; can you recall the dash and daring of Stephen Decatur and his associates who broke the power of Tripolitan pirates and won the way for the freedom of shipping; can you tell your children about Washington and his patriotic armies that gave life and vitality and power to the Declaration of Independence, without this thrill of Americanism?

This is the wonderful story that runs through the whole fabric of our National life, the story of the persistent, courageous, self-sacrificing fight, often against discouraging odds, for human freedom and the right of the individual to make the most of himself. We tell of the fearful struggle of the Civil War with its intense heroism, Abraham Lincoln and the birth of the Emancipation Proclamation. Can't you see the children thrill as they listen and their eyes grow bright with the thought that they, too, are American citizens?

And all this panorama of splendid achievement and fighting for right, justice and equality is but a background of the present world struggle in which we have our part as comrades of the nations that are unholding the things most dear to mankind. What a timid, pitiful figure is he who shrinks from the sound of the fray and hears not the glorious call to the colors, the summons to do a man's work in an American's way!

Thank God, the spirit of our fathers still lives exultant, athletic, purposeful and determined.

This day I received a letter from a friend training in Fort Ethan Allen, in Vermont. This friend is a youth who has all that life can give, wealth, education, social and business standing, yet he gladly responded to the call for volunteers and writes these glowing words after weeks in camp:

"This training is already making finer men of us. We are learning that we must risk and give of all we have to save and rebuild men and instinctively we are all starting on ourselves and are working to our utmost to so shape our lives that we can do this work and do it fearlessly and well when we go to France. In short, we are trying to build up a spirit of living and thinking which is as far as possible in accord with the ideals for which we are fighting. The result is we are building a camp of serious-minded, clean-living men of true optimism and we hope of Christians.

We are going into this war not in the spirit of killing (though killing must be done), only in the spirit of service and with the highest ideals of giving to others. I firmly believe that any man with the right stuff in him who enters this work and will override the privations and sacrifices he must make will come out a far better man than when he enlisted. And while I appreciate what enlistment may mean, I also know that if any man sees it as his duty to his country and his God to fight for liberty and Christianity he will be the happiest man in the world when he puts on a United States uniform and gives himself to Uncle Sam."

Heaven help and pity you if you can read that without feeling the "thrill of radiant Americanism!"

He Is Still a Citizen.

ANTELOPE, Or., Jan. 5.—(To the Editor.)—A man born in Germany comes to this country when a young man and becomes a duly naturalized citizen, according to our laws, and in the course of time acquires a farm and other property; will also mention that he married and raised a family.

He gets the Canada land boom feeling about 10 or 12 years ago, sells all his holdings in Oregon and moves up there, family and all, then files on homestead and of course swears his intention to become a Canadian subject, as per the laws in Canada, so he could file on the land.

After being there one year and a half he sickens of the deal and sells out, comes back to Oregon and goes to work once more to make a home where he left off.

Is he a citizen of the United States or Canada, and if not a citizen, can he still have papers fixed up to date?

It would be also fair to mention that he is a well-liked citizen and has abided by all laws and, last, but not least, has been very liberal with Red Cross and other good war measures.

M. A. S.

When a foreign-born naturalized American leaves this country to take up land and become a citizen of another country, he must satisfy the laws of the country to which he goes before he loses his American citizenship. Merely taking out first papers and therefore signifying his intention of becoming a citizen does not make him a citizen of Canada, and therefore does not deprive him of his rights as a citizen of the United States.

Age at Which Girls May Marry.

PORTLAND, Jan. 7.—(To the Editor.)—(1) A says that a girl can marry at the age of 14 in the state of Oregon or Washington. B says a girl must be 16 and have both father's and mother's consent.

(2) If a man and wife are separated and a mother has the daughter with her (but not divorced) and the mother swears the daughter is 18 when she is only 14, can she be prosecuted for it?

(3) If a mother marries her 14-year-old daughter to a soldier does the Government allow her $15 a month to live on?

E. A. S.

(1) A girl must be 15 years of age to be married in Washington; 16 in Oregon; and unless 18 years old, must have the consent of her parents, or legal guardian in either state.

(2) If a mother swears falsely concerning her daughter's age, she can be prosecuted for it. Recently a woman in Washington took oath that her daughter was over 15 years of age. She is now in the State Penitentiary.

(3) If a girl under 15 years old marries, the marriage is legal, under the common law, and the wife would be entitled to such allowance as the Government makes.

Pruning of Hydrangeas.

ASTORIA, Or., Jan. 6.—(To the Editor.)—I wish a strong healthy growth upon the blue Hydrangea Hortensia. (1) If I remove the tops till within six inches of the surface of the ground will the new shoots bloom this year? (2) If so, when shall I prune?

SUBSCRIBER.

(1) Yes.

(2) Prune in March.

CITY SHOULD CONTEST ORDER

Writer Doubts Commission's Authority to Override Franchise Rates.

PORTLAND, Jan. 7.—(To the Editor.)—Judging from conversation heard on streetcars, the 6-cent-fare decision by the Public Service Commission is about the most unpopular decision rendered in the history of this state.

The street railway is operating under a contract with the people of this city the terms of which expressly provide for a fare not to exceed 5 cents. Citizens have built up the suburbs of the city under this contract or franchise. They bought and improved property in the outlying districts feeling secure against increased transportation rates to and from their work.

The authority of the Commission to set aside the terms of this contract is questioned. If the Legislature gave the Commission power to override the will and expressed wishes of the people, wantonly to break contracts and approve measures annulling legal franchises, then the Legislature is to be condemned. But has the Commission this power?

This decision places the burden for alleged necessary relief of the transportation company upon the people who must ride streetcars. The rich, who own automobiles, are exempt. The Commission cites automobiles as one cause of lessened receipts of the company. For this they decide the poor people, who cannot afford machines, must pay increased fares.

This decision means a readjustment of suburban property values. It means empty houses in outlying districts and congestion in sections within walking distance of industrial plants. It means fewer home owners in the city, for the poor people cannot own property in the city's close-in districts. It is a death blow to the city pioneer, who would build up and improve the city's suburbs. It adds to the burdens of the poor and eventually means a return of the jitney or community-owned automobiles to carry joint owners to and from work.

It is claimed that refusal to carry passengers for a proffered 5-cent fare would constitute a violation of the streetcar company's franchise, thereby opening a way for the city to take over the property. Then, under city operation, any deficit would be met by taxation, which would be paid by all citizens—a seemingly just method. Or the lines might be operated under provisions similar to those under which the Government has taken over the railroads.

Furthermore, the end of the streetcar company's woes are not yet. A giant electrical rival looms in the immediate future. Indeed, electric lighting business is now shared by another company, which is building a great plant to compete in furnishing the needed power which the Public Service Commission mentions as a sort of soothing balm in its unpopular decision. Already employes of the streetcar company are talking more wages. Does this all mean a further advance in fares, another violation of franchise agreement?

A decrease in suburban property values means increased taxes on holdings in the center of the city. Under city operation of streetcar lines any deficit would be met by taxation. A low fare spells increased suburban values and less taxes for centralized holdings; more home owners; no congested district; a healthier, happier, more contented people.

It is certainly up to our City Commission to fight this ruling to the last trench, for the welfare of our city is largely in their hands to protect. It is not only their sworn duty, but a patriotic duty, for if we would build up an industrial community we must protect the interests and well-being of those whose labor is necessary for this upbuilding. It is an opportunity for the City Commissioners to show the people for whom they are working.

EDGAR W. STAHL.

PRESS PRAISES BIG 1918 ANNUAL

Northwest Newspapers Comment on The Oregonian's New Year Number.

The New Year number of The Oregonian is not as elaborate as some former editions have been, but it one well worth sending away to a friend.—Newberg Graphic.

The New Year's Oregonian is as usual an embarrassment of riches.—McMinnville Telephone-Register.

The New Year's edition of the Portland Oregonian, which arrived today, is one of the best ever published, and, as heretofore, contains interesting accounts, portraits and incidents of people, the various sections and the industries of Oregon.—Roseburg News.

It contains a pictorial supplement of pictures in connection with Uncle Sam's entry into the war that is the finest we have seen.—Baker Herald.

The very best New Year's edition of a newspaper we have ever seen was that issued by the Portland Oregonian on the first day of 1918.—Grays Harbor Washingtonian, Hoquiam, Wash.

The 1918 Oregonian annual is fraught with photographs, stories and special articles that cause the hearts of loyal sons and daughters to beat with a new pride as they turn the pages, look and read.—Hood River Glacier.

The annual New Year's number of the Portland Oregonian comes forth once more to call attention of the world to the progress in the development of Portland, Oregon and the Northwest.—Heppner Gazette-Times.

Altogether it was a wonderful issue and one that reflects credit on The Oregonian and the state that it represents.—Gresham Outlook.

The New Year's edition of the Portland Oregonian was a new encyclopedia of pictures and information.—Vancouver Sun.

The Oregonian's New Year edition, in point of typography, illustration and statistical information, is sure 100 per cent among special editions.—Scio Tribune.

The resources of this portion of Uncle Sam's domain are so fittingly and clearly set forth in illustrated articles as to impress most favorably those Eastern people who are fortunate enough to receive a copy, and will doubtless result in a large emigration of desirable people to the Pacific Coast from the states where old king Winter has such a deadly grip, and Vancouver will surely profit thereby.—Vancouver Columbian.

Special editions at this season of the year are distinctly the thing, and the one The Oregonian got out on January 1 was a credit to itself and the city it represents.—Monmouth Herald.

Soldier's Allotment to Mother.

PORTLAND, Jan. 7.—(To the Editor.)—I am a single man and liable to be drafted into the National Army. I have been contributing monthly to the partial support of my mother, but she could manage to get along without same. If I contribute one-half of my soldier's pay to her support what additional amount would she receive from the Government?

ONE INTERESTED.

The Government would contribute $10 additional, provided the sum of that allowance and of your own allotment of pay did not exceed the average sum habitually contributed to your mother's support by you in the last year, preceding your enlistment.

Plan of Rash Lover Works.

Baltimore American.

Belle—George proposed to me last night. Nell—His friends bet him he couldn't stay sober long enough to avoid doing anything rash.

In Other Days.

Twenty-five Years Ago.

From The Oregonian of Jan. 8, 1893.

Washington. — A bill to provide a temporary government for Alaska was introduced into the Senate this morning. It provides for a seat of government at Sitka, and the general laws of the state of Oregon are declared to be the law in the territory of Alaska.

Seattle.—At midnight yesterday engine No. 312, with Patsy McEvoy at the throttle, hauled the first train into Seattle that came through from the East over the Great Northern.

New York. — George Slosson today challenged any billiard player in the world to a match game of billiards for $1000 a side.

Preparations for the funeral of the late W. S. Ladd are nearly completed. The services will take place at 10:30 o'clock tomorrow morning at the First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Arthur J. Brown, the family pastor, officiating.

The South Portland Improvement Association has effected a permanent organization.

Half a Century Ago.

From The Oregonian of Jan. 8, 1868.

On next Friday evening the Philharmonic Society of this city will give a concert at the Oro Fino hall. The past performances and the high reputation of the society are a sufficient guarantee to the public that the entertainment will be one in every way worthy of their liberal patronage. The proceeds will be donated to the Library Association.

A statement is made that Secretary Seward has bought part of the island of Borneo. This may be meant as a joke, but the Secretary seems to be slightly crazed on the subject of buying foreign territory.

No attempt was made yesterday to send a boat up the Columbia, navigation above the Willamette being effectually closed by ice.

We noticed yesterday a considerable squad of men going north on Front street armed with picks, grappling irons, cords, etc. A short time afterward they were found at the lake below town sawing, grappling and taking out great slabs of ice at a rate that suggested not less than 1,000,000 mint juleps next dog days.

At Portland yesterday morning at 8 o'clock the thermometer stood at 13 above zero. At 8 P. M. the mercury had risen to 15 degrees. The biting wind gave the impression that the day was much colder than indicated by the thermometer.

The Kaiser's Soliloquy.

By James Barton Adams.

To be or not to be? That is the question,
Whether I'll make a winning in the game
Of sanguinary war that threatens to
Depopulate my realm of fighting braves
And leave to me but antiquated men,
And women and their kiddish offspring, and
A bunch of titled guys o'er which to reign,
Or if by turn of fortune's roulette wheel
I'll put it over those who seek to dump
My great imperial person in the soup
And bring the whole world to its bended knees
With heads bowed lowly at one royal foot,
The while the other rests upon their necks.
But no, not all. Hell and its fiendish powers
Could not compel that cursed Yankee horde
To bow the suppliant knee even to me,
The chosen one of Gott, placed upon earth
To shoot Teutonic kultur into all
Who dare oppose the will of me und Gott;
An ignorant, uncultured legion that
Believe their star-bespangled Uncle Sam
Of sport attire and white angora beard
A greater man than I—so great I seem
In their viewpoint a liliputian at
His giant knee. It is to laugh, ha! ha!
And yet 'tis not to laugh hilariously,
For, to my great amazement, when the cards
Were coming my way in the bloody game
And I in triumph led my leading trump
He slipped the joker from his flowing sleeve
And with a ghoul-grin commandeered the trick.
Yet will I not despair, will not allow
My royal feet to suffer from a chill,
But with the battle cry, "Onward mit Gott!"
I yet will strive to reach the shining goal
Of my ambitions, and if I should fail
I'll fade into oblivion, on my lips
A redhot curse upon the meddling head
Of Uncle Sam, the guy who butted in
And knocked my crowing cockerel off the perch.

Packages Held at New York.

PORTLAND, Or., Jan. 7.—(To the Editor.)—Kindly give the proper method for sending a package to a soldier in France.

Several days ago I sent a box through an express company which I now understand will go no farther than New York City; it has been necessary for a wire to be sent asking for its return to this city. The address read according to usual instructions, giving name, regiment, division, company; also care Commanding General, New York City, for France.

Surely there is some method by which we can send tobacco and various other things to our boys "over there."

A SOLDIER'S WIFE.

Presumably your package was held under an order of the War Department that Christmas parcels destined for members of the expeditionary force, would not be forwarded if received at New York after December 5.

Marriage in California.

TURNER, Or., Jan. 5.—(To the Editor.)—(1) What is the youngest age at which a girl may marry in California?

(2) Is it true that no marriage license is necessary in that state? If not, what procedure is necessary?

"INTERESTED."

(1) Fifteen with parents' consent; 18 without.

(2) License is required and both parties must appear and be examined under oath or submit affidavit.

Location of Soldier.

PORTLAND, Jan. 7.—(To the Editor.)—What branch of the War Department would furnish information as to the location of a soldier in the United States Army when war was declared, but who has not been heard from since?

MRS. A. L. M.

Write to Adjutant-General, War Department, Washington, D. C. If the soldier is in the expeditionary force the Government will not reveal his exact location.

Unlawful to Trap Beaver.

HUBBARD, Or., Jan. 6.—(To the Editor.)—Please tell me if it is lawful to trap beaver in Oregon, and if so what counties?

CONSTANT READER.

It is unlawful in all counties.